DELIA,

A

PATHETIC

AND

INTERESTING

TALE.

Virtue when diſtreſs'd, can ſmile on Death,
And as a friend embrace it.

———*Yes, thou ſhalt find*
Women, when armed with Virtue, know no fear
But guilt and ſhame.

IN FOUR VOLUMES

VOL. IV.

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BRITISH MUSEUM

DELIA.

LETTER LXXXV.

Mrs. Wentworth to *Miſs Bloomfield.*

WHAT ſhall I ſay to you, my poor mortified Julia!—You renounce conſolation and reprobate compaſſion: In truth, I am glad of it, for I have none to ſpare you. Your caution was entirely unneceſſary; you were in no danger of being fatigued with preachments, on the text *of virtue its own reward*—a text by no means applicable to you, whoſe misfortunes were the conſequences of your own coquetry. It was your own folly, my dear, which, by driving Revell from you in diſpleaſure, precluded an explanation, and gave to your arch enemy thoſe opportunities of tormenting you, which he ſo eagerly ſeized and ſo maliciouſly enjoyed. However, notwith-

ſtanding your prohibitions, and avowed contempt of my predictions, I will ſtill preſume to prophecy. Your brother will go to France—you will make your promiſed viſit to Somerſetſhire, where you may be certain of meeting Lord Revell, and your differences will be eaſily accommodated. Yes, my dear Julia, my heart ſtill aſſures me, that you are the Beatrice, deſtined to manacle our whimſical Benedict—to you we refer the avenging of our wrongs—make him feel the weight of thoſe fetters—the full force of thoſe obligations he ſo impiouſly preſumes to deride! Every thing is in readineſs for the departure of my friends. Their ſervants and baggage are gone by ſea, to Briſtol, which is not more than ten miles diſtant from their ſeat. They go by Holy-head—in two days they will leave us—Delia can no longer diſguiſe her dejection.—Lord Archer perceives it with exceſſive concern.—Neceſſary as this journey muſt be to the regulation of his affairs in England, and warmly as he has fixed his wiſhes on it, he generouſly offers to relinquiſh

quiſh his plan entirely; or to go alone, and return to her in a month. Never did I ſee ſo lover-like a huſband—If, as you ſuſpect, Lady Harriot, by intereſted ſubterfuges, prevented my friend from being united to your brother, ſhe could not have ſupplied her with a better ſubſtitute.

I dread the moment that muſt ſeparate us—and ſurrounded as I am with the beauties of ſummer, look forward to the approach of winter, with infinitely more pleaſure than I ever anticipated the return of ſpring; and I receive an additional ſatisfaction from the flattering idea, that Julia and Revell, thoſe dear and eſtimable friends, will return with my Delia and her huſband, to complete the happineſs of our little ſociety.

H. WENTWORTH.

LETTER LXXXVI.

Lady Archer to *Mrs. Wentworth.*

NOT an hour has paſſed ſince our ſeparation; I can ſtill from the win-

dow I write at, diſcern my native ſhore. O that the intervening time I muſt ſpend, ere I return to it were elapſed!

Lord Archer is already ſick, he has been obliged to go to bed; but I am perfectly well, and my little Delia lies aſleep at my ſide.

Can you be ſurprized at the regret and anxiety with which I have bade adieu to my venerable friends. Life, at all ages precarious, is doubly ſo, when undermined by years and infirmities: one proof of friendſhip I muſt exact from you, nor can I ever forgive the omiſſion of it; if you perceive the ſlighteſt ſymptoms of decay in any of my beloved parents, let not the apprehenſion of alarming me prevent you from inſtantly apprizing me of it. I will return without loſing an hour. Oh, Henrietta, when they ſtrained me this morning to their revered boſoms, and bedewed me with tears of parental tenderneſs, I felt a melancholy preſage, that I ſhould never meet them all again!

After

After our melancholy adieus at Dunleary, when we got into the boat which conveyed us to the packet, you ſtood on the rocks and looked after our little bark, even when it was no longer diſcernable, I ſaw you through a teleſcope.—I ſaw Wentworth, who ſupported you, wipe away your tears and tenderly embrace you; I ſaw you turn from your huſband to gaze with fond regret after your departing friend. I ſtretched out my hands to you, but reflecting that I was now totally loſt to your view, I burſt into tears.

The ſun is juſt ſetting—the coaſt recedes—I can ſcarcely diſtinguiſh our beloved mountains from the clouds. I now loſe them entirely—ah, with what different ſenſations ſhall I approach the ſhore I ſo unwillingly deſert!

I have this inſtant diſcovered, that this is the ſame packet in which I ſailed to England with my father, when, previous to his marriage with Lady Harriot, he took me to viſit his intended bride. Bloomfield

was my companion in that paſſage. Can ſeven years have elapſed ſince a period, which appears but as yeſterday!—I recollect even the minuteſt circumſtances—every word—every look!—At this very window we ſat together, whilſt the moon ſhone brightly and we contemplated her reflection in the waters.—I ſtart as from a dream, and aſk myſelf if I am really the wife of another?—How ſhall we promiſe at any period of our lives, for the actions of a future? With what horror ſhould I have rejected the idea, that I could ever violate my faith to Bloomfield!—a thouſand times have I ſecretly promiſed myſelf "he may "change, but I will be conſtant."—Yet think me not ſo weak as to be afflicted at a breach of vows, which are in their nature conditional; think not I repent my union with Lord Archer—the father of my little Delia!—Sweet innocent, ſhe laughs in her ſleep. O thou little ſmiling cherub, not for worlds would I part with thee!—Yet, Henrietta, one idea lies heavy on my heart. I have now been married thirteen months, and

and never till this hour have I written or pronounced the name of Bloomfield; but my boſom has been tortured with a reſtleſs curioſity, an anxious and unceaſing deſire to be informed of his fate, and the motive which prompted his return to Ireland. You have had many private interviews with Julia;—I have ſeen you ſtop abruptly when I interrupted you; I have ſeen from the looks of both, that your converſations were particular and intereſting, and felt a ſecret conviction, that her brother was the ſubject of them. I wiſhed and determined to enquire, but awed by your ſtrict and ſevere ideas of propriety, I wanted reſolution to introduce a ſubject, which I feared would expoſe me to your cenſure.—But what I could not ſpeak, I can write. Tell me, then, Henrietta, for I am convinced you know it—tell me, Is Bloomfield happy?—has he recovered his reaſon, or did he every loſe it?—was my remembrance driven by a new attachment from his breaſt?—but above all, explain that ſtrange enigma why he returned from America, to perſe-

cute with his preſence, and cruelly reproach with falſhood, the creature whom his baſe deſertion had reduced to the extreme of miſery!

A freſh gale ſprings from the weſt. Adieu, my head grows giddy.

Holy-head.

We are landed, after a paſſage of fourteen hours. I encloſe a few lines to my friends.—If you cenſure my interrogatories, do not reply to them, but tacitly puniſh me by ſilence.

DELIA.

LETTER LXXXVII.

From the Same to *the Same.*

Briſtol.

OUR journey through Wales would have been delightful, if I could have diveſted myſelf of the idea of the friends I had quitted. "I drag at each remove a "lengthening chain." To-day we croſſed the

the Severn, and arrived here at noon. There is a good deal of company here. As I ſtood this evening at the window of our inn, I ſaw Seymour in the ſtreet. I ſent a ſervant to tell him, a lady wiſhed to ſpeak with him; he returned with my meſſenger, and I cannot expreſs his ſurprize and pleaſure, at this unexpected *rencontre*. Lord Archer, who values him not only on account of his own merit, but becauſe he is ſo greatly my favourite, very warmly preſſed him to accompany us to Mount Avon, and be our gueſt during his reſidence in this part of the country. But, as he ſtays here merely to drink the waters, he excuſed himſelf; however, he promiſed to ſpend great part of his time with us.

Revell, who was informed by Lord Archer's letters of our operations, is this inſtant arrived. I aſked him if he had eſcorted Julia to London, and why he did not perſuade her to accompany him hither? He replied, with a chagrin he could not conceal,

that Miſs Bloomfield had formed engagements of a very different nature, and was on the point of being married. "All that "vexes me in the affair," continued he, endeavouring to aſſume an air of indifference, "is, that ſhe will render herſelf the "moſt wretched woman exiſting: her in- "tended is the moſt impudent and inſuf- "ferable coxcomb I ever converſed with; "he treated me with ſuch inſolence, no- "thing but my reſpect for her, could have "prevented me from caning him. 'Tis a "pity a girl of her ſenſe ſhould be thrown "away on ſuch a wretch; and his charac- "ter is no leſs deteſtable, than his manners "are odious. It aſtoniſhes me, that the "Colonel, her brother, does not oppoſe "this alliance; he is a man of fine ſenſe, "an excellent heart and elegant manners. "Indeed, he extremely reſembles you; "you ſhould not ſuffer family diſſentions "to deprive you of the ſociety of a rela- "tion ſo amiable.—I am convinced no- "thing would give him greater ſatisfaction "than a reconciliation, for he liſtened to

"every

" every converſation relative to your fa-
" mily with evident delight, and always
" appeared ſolicitous to introduce the ſub-
" ject. Miſs Bloomfield deſired me not to
" mention this excurſion of your's in his
" preſence; perhaps, ſhe imagines he
" might make you a viſit, and as ſhe is
" very high-ſpirited, might deem it a con-
" ceſſion inconſiſtent with his dignity. I
" think I heard Lady Harriot ſay, that
" the origin of the diſagreement, was his
" going into the army, contrary to the ap-
" probation of Sir Richard, who was his
" guardian. Now, though your grand-
" father might have had ſome reaſon to be
" diſpleaſed at his conduct, I can't ſee why
" you ſhould pretend to reſent it.—Pray,
" was it incumbent on him to conſult your
" inclinations, in reſpect to the profeſſion
" he embraced?—Nor was his breach of
" duty to Sir Richard, of ſo heinous a na-
" ture, as to preclude forgiveneſs."

Fortunately Lord Archer was abſent, whilſt he thus giddily ran on.

New wonders riſe! Why did Julia give Revell a caution, I ſhould have thought, ſo unneceſſary? — Henrietta, if he ſhould again find me out—again terrify me with his preſence and perſecute me with reproaches! I could ſhrink to the centre of the earth from his ſight!—But has he not promiſed me, that "my view ſhall never "more be blaſted by an object ſo hateful." Theſe were his words—I read them but once, but I can never forget them.

I feel for Revell's diſappointed hopes. Yet did not Julia acknowledge to us, that ſhe was diſengaged? We both remarked in her manners a partiality to Revell. Is the ſiſter as inconſiſtent as the brother!

We ſleep here to-night, and early to-morrow proceed to Mount Avon.

Mount Avon.

This ſeat, my dear Henrietta, is delightfully ſituated on one of the hills which ſurround the city of Bath, and Lord Archer's agent, who has acquitted himſelf to admiration of the truſt repoſed in him, has ornamented it in a manner equally elegant and

and magnificent. If I were to conſult my taſte alone, I could wiſh the decorations and furniture rather leſs ſuperb; but it is extremely natural that Lord Archer, after ſo long an eclipſe, ſhould wiſh to reſume the ancient ſplendour of his family. Were you witneſs to his tenderneſs and attention, to the pleaſure he expreſſes at my approbation, and the aſſiduity with which he conſults my taſte, you would imagine he had received my hand but yeſterday, and this morning had conducted me to his home. Oh, Henrietta, he is the beſt and moſt amiable of mankind! Adieu—your little Delia is better than ever. DELIA.

LETTER LXXXVIII.

From the Same to the Same.

NOT a line have I received in anſwer to my letters! Four mails due, and the winds ſtill adverſe! Ah, if I could prevail with Eolus to confer on me a preſent, ſimilar to that which he beſtowed on Ulyſſes; with what pleaſure would I ſend my

my zephyrs to fill the ſails of the veſſel which brings me tidings from my native ſhore, or rather from the friends which render it ſo dear to me!

We have already received viſits from the greateſt part of the neighbouring gentry. I could gladly diſpenſe with theſe formalities; life is too ſhort, and time too precious to waſte it on thoſe we neither love nor value. But I ſee it is Lord Archer's wiſh to entertain company, and he has ſo long coincided with my deſires, that it would be ungrateful to repine at ſubmitting to his.—He is gone this evening to Briſtol, to ſettle ſome accounts with his agent, who is confined by a hurt.—It grows late;—I wonder what detains him.

The remainder of this letter, as it contains little more than what will be found in the next, is omitted.

DELIA.

LET-

LETTER LXXXIX.

Colonel Bloomfield to *Julia.*

Mount Avon.

JULIA, do I wake, or is all around me deluſion!—Have I ſeen her—did I hold her to my heart—am I at this inſtant beneath the ſame roof with her!

What now avail the reſolutions I had formed to drive her from my thoughts. Deſtined to be the ſport of ſome ſtrange fatality, one inſtant has overturned the labour of years, deſtroyed my boaſted philoſophy, and recalled to my mind all its painful regrets—all its agonizing ſenſations—even in the moment when I hoped I had ſilenced them for ever!—Determined to viſit my friend Morley (whoſe ill ſtate of health confines him to Bath) before I left the South, I croſſed Hampſhire, and arrived at Bath laſt Saturday. I remained with him two days, and left him late this evening, purpoſing to ſleep at Briſtol, and purſue my way to town through Glouceſterſhire. I had ſcarcely proceeded three miles,

when

when I was alarmed by the report of a piſtol, and on haſtening to the ſpot from whence the noiſe ſeemed to proceed, I perceived a gentleman whom four villains, who were robbing him, had thrown on the ground, whilſt a fifth held a piſtol to the breaſt of his ſervant. I had loaded piſtols in my holſters, and inſtantly arming myſelf and my two ſervants, flew to his aſſiſtance; but the wretches, alarmed at our approach, betook themſelves to flight. My ſervants, however, purſued and ſeized one of them, whilſt I aſſiſted the gentleman to riſe, and bound a handkerchief round a ſlight wound he had received on his left ſhoulder. He expreſſed his ſenſe of the ſervice I had rendered him in the moſt polite and pleaſing terms, and entreated me to accompany him to his houſe, which he informed me, was ſcarce a mile diſtant. I complied with his requeſt, he remounted his horſe, and in a quarter of an hour we arrived at the elegant ſeat which was formerly occupied by Mr. Veſey. As I did not know that gentleman had quitted it,

and

and was not perſonally known to him, I naturally concluded that he was my companion. He led me into a drawing-room, where we found a lady ſeated at a Piano. She aroſe at our entrance, but as it was very duſk, I did not diſcern her features. "I have been expecting you im-"patiently," ſaid ſhe, in a voice that penetrated to my heart; "what can have de-"tained you?—Good God! you bleed!"

"An accident, my love," returned he, "which, but for the intervention of "this gentleman, might have proved a "fatal one.—My Delia, you muſt make "my acknowledgments to this generous "ſtranger."

She turned to me, but as ſoon as her eyes met mine, ſhe ſuddenly averted them, and ſinking into her huſband's arms, ſwooned away.—"My Delia! my life! "my love!" cried he, fondly claſping her to his breaſt, whilſt I ſtood motionleſs at his ſide. He called aloud for help, but the domeſtics, entirely occupied by the robber we had taken, heard him not.

"Support

"Support her, I entreat you, for an inſtant," ſaid he, "whilſt I call for aſſiſt-
"ance!" Aſtoniſhment almoſt deprived me of my reaſon, yet I held out my arms to ſuſtain her.

"Is the ſcene before me real," ſaid I,
"or is it ſome ſtrange deception of the
"ſenſes! Do I once more hold my Delia
"to my heart!—my Delia! gracious hea-
"ven, is ſhe not the wife of another!"
Juſt then ſhe opened her eyes, and ſpringing from my arms, flung herſelf on a ſopha, and again fainted.

"She hates me," ſaid I; "yet where-
"fore am I the object of her averſion! O
"Delia, falſe and cruel as thou art, it is
"ſtill my deſtiny to love—to adore thee!"

I had thrown myſelf on my knees beſide her, and hung over her in an inexpreſſible agony, when her huſband—Lord Archer, let me call him, re-entered; but he ſeemed entirely unconſcious of my attitude, and appeared only ſolicitous for the recovery of his lovely Delia. Soon as the medicines they uſed began to revive her, I retired

retired to a diſtance, apprehenſive leſt the view of ſo diſpleaſing an object ſhould renew her agitation. She opened her eyes and threw them around, as if in ſearch of me; but on perceiving me, inſtantly cloſed them, and reclined her head on Lord Archer's ſhoulder; then riſing, ſaid ſhe would retire. He ſupported her, then turning to me, entreated me to excuſe his leaving me, and ſaid, he would return in a few minutes. I walked about the room in an agitation I cannot deſcribe; I once went to the door in the intention of flying immediately from the houſe; but an irreſiſtible power ſeemed to detain me, and I continued wavering and irreſolute until Lord Archer's return.

I aſked him how was the lady?

"She is better," ſaid he, "but con-
"tinues weak and terrified on account of
"this little hurt on my arm, which can
"have no diſagreeable conſequence, except
"that of alarming her."

I ſaid, "I was extremely rejoiced his
"adventure was likely to terminate ſo for-
"tunately,

" tunately, and as it was growing late,
" would bid him good night."

" No, my deliverer," cried he, catching my hand, " you muſt not leave me. To-
" night, at leaſt, you muſt make this houſe
" your home, and to-morrow perhaps,
" when my Delia joins her entreaties with
" mine, you may be prevailed on to be-
" come our gueſt for a longer period."

I ſaid, " I had the honour of being re-
" lated to Lady Archer, and was formerly
" known to her."

" My Delia's relation!" ſaid he, " this
" is an additional incentive to eſteem. Yet
" ſhe did not recollect you—but you muſt
" excuſe her; to-morrow ſhe will receive
" you with all the affection and gratitude
" you merit."

Yes, Julia, he is, as you have repreſented him, ſenſible, elegant and amiable. I have loſt the antipathy I was ſo weak as to feel for him, when I regarded him as the uſurper of my rights; for the whole tenor of his conduct convinces me he knew not I had any. He appeared ſurprized,

that

that he had never heard me ſpoken of but very ſlightly by the family at Bloomfield, and was ſtill more aſtoniſhed to find, that I was your brother.

"I know," ſaid he, "that there was a "diſagreement between you and Sir Ri- "chard, on account of your clandeſtinely "adopting a profeſſion, to which he was "extremely averſe. But he is the moſt "candid and benevolent of men, and will "eaſily be induced to overlook ſo venial a "tranſgreſſion. Delia and I return to "Bloomfield the beginning of the winter "—let us have the ſatisfaction of leading "you to your friends, a returning prodi- "gal, and I will venture to promiſe you, "the ring and fatted calf."

There was a charm in his converſation, and an ingenuouſneſs in his manners, which irreſiſtibly attracted my eſteem. Nor can I conſider him as my rival in Delia's affections, for long before ſhe ever knew him, they were loſt to me.

At ſupper, we were joined by Lord Revell, who had ſpent the day at Bath, but

on

on hearing a vague report of the robbery, had haſtened home. He enquired for you; I took this opportunity of rectifying the error into which he had been betrayed by Elwood's ſtrange conduct. He liſtened to me with a ſurprize and pleaſure, which convinces me you are not indifferent to him.

We parted not till it was late.—I paſſed a reſtleſs and agitated night, yet ſtrongly determined not to hazard another interview, I aroſe early next morning and wrote an apology to Lord Archer, for my abrupt departure, which I gave to a ſervant to be delivered to him, on his riſing, and ordered my horſes; but on going down, was met by his Lordſhip, in the hall (informed by the ſervants, I ſuppoſe, of my intention) he inſiſted ſo ſtrenuouſly on my remaining with him only a few hours, that I could not, with a ſhadow of politeneſs, refuſe to comply with his entreaties.

To confeſs the truth, my reſolution was a ſacrifice to prudence, and I was more than half pleaſed at being able to reconcile myſelf to the breach of it. It was a fine morning,

morning, and we ranged through his demeſne, which is very beautiful, until we were ſummoned to the houſe by the breakfaſt bell: we found Lord Revell alone in the parlour; he informed us, that Lady Archer was too ill to riſe.

I felt a conviction, that this was but a pretence to avoid ſeeing me.—"No wonder ſhe ſhould fear to meet me:" ſaid I, "what can be ſo hateful as the preſence of "a perſon we have baſely wronged!—but "her ſubterfuges ſhall not avail.—I will "never leave the houſe, until I ſee her!"

At dinner ſhe ſent another apology to excuſe her abſence—ſhe was ſtill too ill to leave her apartment. Lord Archer appeared alarmed;—after dinner, he ſpoke of ſending for a phyſician; he went to her, but returning ſoon afterwards with a chearful air, he told us, ſhe was much better, and would admit us to drink tea in her dreſſing-room.

At half paſt ſeven a ſervant came to acquaint us, his lady waited tea. I am as weak as a girl, my dear Julia,—my heart fluttered,

fluttered, and every ſtep that brought me nearer to her apartment, encreaſed my trepidation. She aroſe at our entrance—I could not raiſe my eyes, but I thought ſhe appeared extremely affected.

"You ſee, my dear Delia," ſaid Lord Archer, as he preſented me to her, "that "my misfortune of laſt night, was a diſ-"guiſed bleſſing: for as ſuch, I am cer-"tain, you will join me in regarding an "accident, which has been the cauſe of "our re-union with a friend and relation, "ſo eſtimable as Colonel Bloomfield."

She curtſeyed without ſpeaking, and I bowed with the ſame diſtant formality.

Both Lord Archer and his friend appeared hurt at her cold reception of me.

I had often been ſo weak as to wiſh for an interview with Delia. I flattered myſelf, that conſcious of my ſuperiority, I ſhould look down on her with contempt, and treat her with a mortifying indifference: but now that my deſire was accompliſhed, I felt ſtruck with awe, as if in the preſence of ſome ſuperior being, and dared not

to

to raiſe my eyes; and ſhe appeared equally embarraſſed. Her confuſion encreaſed mine. I thought Lord Archer muſt perceive my diſtreſs; I ardently wiſhed I had not waited for this mortifying interview. When tea was over, I aroſe—walked about the room—went to the window—obſerved that it was a fine evening, ſaid I liked riding by moonlight extremely, and ſpoke of ordering my horſes.

"Now, Delia," cried Lord Archer, "you muſt exert your influence, and pre-"vail on our friend not to forſake us."

"I would gladly," replied ſhe, in a weak and tremulous voice; "I would "gladly exert it to give you pleaſure; but "with Colonel Bloomfield, I fear it will "be in vain—"

She bluſhed exceedingly as ſhe ſpoke, and turned to the window.

"But you muſt try," ſaid he; "if I "were to judge from my own feelings, I "ſhould ſay, your influence could not be "exerted without effect. Come, you ſhall "play—you ſhall ſing, for him."

He led her to the inſtrument — ſhe touched the keys—ſhe attempted to ſing—but her voice failed her—that angelic voice which ſo forcibly recalled to my mind thoſe hours of love and harmony, which now recur to my memory like ſome golden dream! I was ſoftened even to the tenderneſs of an infant, and weakly ſympathized in her diſtreſs, when I ought to have exulted in it. She aroſe abruptly and left the room.—"Her conſtitution is very delicate," ſaid Lord Archer; "I ought not to have in-"ſiſted on her playing: ſhe is ſtill too "weak; but to-morrow, if we find you "poſſeſſed with a ſpirit of rambling, my "Delia's voice, like the harp of David, "ſhall charm the unquiet fiend, and keep "him bound in magic fetters."

She does, indeed, detain me in magic fetters! Treat me with indulgence, my dear ſiſter, and do not too ſeverely cenſure a weakneſs, which experience has not taught you to pity. If I no longer combat a partiality of which I ſeemed deſtined to be the victim, whom can I injure but myſelf?

Delia

Delia tenderly loves her huſband—far be from me the impious wiſh to deprive him of her affection. If I thought myſelf of conſequence to interrupt their mutual happineſs, but for an inſtant, I would fly to the remoteſt quarter of the globe.

You need not write to me; I believe you will ſee me ſoon in London. Delia ſhuns me with aſſiduity; ſhe remains not an inſtant in my preſence, when ſhe can without particularity avoid it; and even for the cold civility with which ſhe treats me, I am indebted to the influence of her huſband.

Adieu!

HORATIO BLOOMFIELD.

LETTER XC.

Lady Archer to *Mrs. Wentworth.*

HENRIETTA, he is ſtill here; but my terrors are diſſipated; calmed by the gentleneſs of his manners, my fears are huſhed! Oh, when I beheld him with my huſband—when I imagined he came to reproach and upbraid me in his preſence,

how bleſt was the inſenſibility which ſuſpended my faculties in the moſt dreadful moment of my exiſtence! Why does he remain here—why diſturb with his preſence, the tranquility of a breaſt he has already ſo cruelly tortured! Lord Archer is faſcinated with him, and oppoſes the inclinations he ſometimes expreſſes, to leave us with the utmoſt earneſtneſs; to avoid particularity, I am obliged to join his entreaties, but Bloomfield muſt obſerve that my inſtances are cold and ſpiritleſs. Archer is ſurprized and diſpleaſed at the little cordiality with which I treat his favourite, and Revell combats my prejudices, as he expreſſes it, with great freedom, and teazes me with expoſtulations on a ſubject, the moſt painful of all others. Thus beſet on all ſides, and afraid to look into what paſſes in my breaſt, I fly alternately from ſociety to ſolitude, and from ſolitude to ſociety. My hours are ſpent in continual ſtruggles with my feelings, and apprehenſive leſt I ſhould awaken the ſuſpicions of my huſband, I dare not even enjoy the ſad luxury

of

of tears. I anticipate with reſtleſs anxiety, the time which ſhall reſtore me to my ever dear and ever valued friends, and behold with ſatisfaction no object but the ſetting ſun, pleaſed with the reflection that another of the tedious days which ſeparate me from them is elapſed.

Archer and Revell are out riding, I have left Bloomfield with Seymour, who ſpends the day with us in the library.

A ſtrange figure on horſeback comes up the avenue. As I catch a glimpſe through the trees, it appears to be a female in a pink and ſilver habit, a white hat with a diamond band and monſtrous plumes of green feathers.—Is this the faſhionable riding dreſs of the country?

How perverſely every circumſtance conſpires to torment me! Judge my aſtoniſhment and vexation, when I found the figure I have deſcribed, to be no other than Lady Mordaunt, whom I left in Ireland, without the leaſt intention of coming hither. I returned the embraces ſhe laviſhed on me

very coldly; but ſhe has not feeling enough to be hurt by indifference, and her exceſſive ſelf-complacency keeps her in continual good humour. After ſaluting Seymor and Bloomfield, the latter ſhe did not recollect, "I am rejoiced to find you ſo delightfully "lodged here, my dear creature. Aye," looking round her, "theſe are apartments "fit for a woman of quality! There's "ſome difference between this ſeat and the "old Cathedral at Bloomfield: Lord for-"give me, I have often wiſhed the ſtorms "would demoliſh it ſome night or other; "and, *entre nous*, it would be no great loſs "if ſome of the old lumber were buried "in the ruins."

"Pray," ſaid Seymor, "what are we "to infer from the *old lumber?* Is it the "furniture, or the inhabitants?"

"Oh, you know well enough; but Lady "Archer's ſo demure. Now you croſs "creature, how can you look ſo grave!— "You don't know how much you are "obliged to me—it was abſolutely you "that put it into my head to come here.

"I coaxed

" I coaxed Sir Humphry's phyſician to " tell him the Briſtol waters would do him " all the good in the world, though I am " confident they wont ſignify a ruſh; the " Bath waters, I believe, might do him " ſome good—but you know now, that " there's nobody there, it would be im- " poſſible to exiſt in it.—I wiſh your houſe " was not at ſo great a diſtance; now if it " was on Clifton Downs, Sir Humphry " and I could take up our abode with you, " and that would be quite delightful.— " You never did any thing ſo wiſe, as to " leave your old rums behind you—what " poſſeſſed you to preſs old Mundungus " to come with you?—I am ſure if he had " been here, I would not have come near " you — the frightful old Hottentot — I " had as lieve meet the Devil! he has no " more idea of politeneſs and gallantry, " or the reſpect due to people of faſhion, " than a common bog-trotter!" Then looking at Bloomfield, ſhe aſked me in a half whiſper, " who that pretty young fel- " low was? I am convinced, Sir," con-

tinued ſhe, aloud, " that I have ſeen you " ſomewhere, but where, I cannot for my " life recollect—indeed, in ſuch a perpe- " tual intercourſe with the beau monde, " it is impoſſible to remember all the peo- " ple of quality one meets.—May I en- " quire your title, Sir?"

" My name, Madam, is Bloomfield."

" Bloomfield! Horatio Bloomfield?"

" The ſame, Madam."

" My dear Bloomfield, how I am en- " chanted to ſee you!" flying to embrace him. " Bleſs me, you are greatly altered! " your cheek was abſolutely a roſe bud— " you had the moſt divine complexion— " not but your preſent browze has more " of the travelled gentleman, and the per- " ſon of quality. I proteſt, I took you " for a Lord, but was convinced you could " not be leſs than a Baronet. Well, how " ſtrangely things will come about! every " creature had it, that you and Delia were " to be married! To be ſure, you were " very fond of each other, its in vain to " deny it—there was a ſtrong flirtation

" ſince

" ſince you were both children. Now
" all's over; do tell us how it came to be
" broken off? Nay, you need not look ſo
" glum, Bloomfield; for to tell you the
" truth, I believe I was ſomewhat to blame
" in the affair—I always adviſed Delia
" never to marry without a title, and ſure
" if you prized her as you ought to have
" done, you were rich enough to purchaſe
" one—it was the leaſt a girl of her fortune
" had a right to expect."

Expreſſion falls ſhort of our mutual confuſion, whilſt the inſenſible wretch thus unfeelingly indulged her unbounded loquacity. Seymor, too quick ſighted not to perceive our conſternation and diſtreſs, inſtantly addreſſed her, and endeavoured to turn her attention to a different object, which was eaſily done. He propoſed to her, a walk in the gardens—though I trembled ſo violently that I could ſcarce ſtand, I was preparing to accompany them. Seymor ſtopped me. " You have no buſineſs
" out," ſaid he, " you were complaining
" of the head-ach, and the graſs is wet;—

" beſide, Lady Mordaunt and I don't " chuſe to have our *tête-a-tête* ſpoiled—ſo " go up to your nurſery, and ſee how your " child does—it is the fitteſt place for you."

" O dear, do go to the pretty little mop- " pet," cried her Ladyſhip, as ſhe left the room, " we ſhall have time enough to " chat, for as there will be no ball to- " night, I ſha'nt leave you till to-morrow " evening."

Judge if this intelligence was calculated to raiſe my ſpirits. Terrified by the idea of her reſuming before Lord Archer, the ſubject on which ſhe had juſt before expatiated, I could no longer command myſelf, no longer repreſs the agony of my ſoul; but as I roſe to leave the room, I burſt into tears. Bloomfield, who ſtood moody and ſilent at a window, flew to me.—My Delia —forgive me—Lady Archer—you weep—am I—he ſtopped, whilſt his boſom heaved with the violence of his perturbation, but ſuddenly recovering my ſtrength, I ruſhed precipitately from him, and flew up ſtairs. Never till that moment, was I diſtracted

with

with ſuch painful and complicated ſenſations! How providential was Lord Archer's abſence! if he had been preſent, what would have become of me! Oh Henrietta, I have committed a fatal error in conſenting to deceive him. I ſometimes almoſt determine to confeſs to him ingenuouſly my former engagements with Bloomfield; but he is happy, and ſhall I deſtroy the tranquility of his generous breaſt. What worſe have I to apprehend, than his knowledge of the truth; nor am I conſcious of any crime which requires to be palliated by the merit of a confeſſion. On this, however, I am determined, if he ever conceives the ſlighteſt ſuſpicion, I will inſtantly reveal to him every thought of my heart.

Whilſt I was buſied by theſe reflections, I received a meſſage from Seymor, to inform me, that he had prevailed on Lady Mordaunt to go out with him in his phaeton, and to deſire we might not wait dinner, as they ſhould neither of them return. I do not know that I was ever more rejoiced than at this intelligence; it removed from

my ſpirits an inexpreſſible weight of terror and anxiety. I ſaw Seymor's friendly deſign in thus taking her away, and inſtead of being hurt at his diſcovery of my ſentiments, I rejoiced to have a friend ſo attentive to my tranquility.

Archer and Revell returned to dinner—but Bloomfield left an apology and was gone to ſpend the day at Bath. I was at no loſs for his motive—he was afraid of encountering Lady Mordaunt—Lord Archer and his friend heard of Seymor's elopement with her Ladyſhip, with great ſurprize, and as they were ignorant of the meaning of his manœuvre, attributed it entirely to whim. I paſſed a much better day than I could have promiſed myſelf, and late in the evening ſtole away from my huſband and Revell to indulge myſelf with a ſolitary walk. As I was returning, I ſaw Seymor in the avenue on horſeback. I went to meet him; he alighted at my approach. I aſked him how he had diſpoſed of Lady Mordaunt? "I have left her ſafe enough in Wiltſhire," ſaid he; "on our way I amuſed her with

"ſuch

" ſuch brilliant deſcriptions of Paris,
" chiefly borrowed from the Arabian Tales
" (I acknowledge the plagiary,) and ſuch
" romantic accounts of its magnificence
" and entertainments, that I have inſpired
" her with a firm determination to pack
" up her luggage, and Sir Humphry, and
" get there as faſt as ſhe can. But what
" confirmed her in this reſolution, was the
" account I gave her of the air balloons,
" which I poſitively aſſured her were
" brought by the French Philoſophers, to
" ſuch an amazing degree of perfection,
" that in fine weather the ladies of quality
" made uſe of no other carriages in their
" viſits and excurſions, and that I myſelf
" had ſeen them flying through the clouds
" in their aerial machines, like flocks of
" wild geeſe, or celeſtial Goddeſſes; whilſt
" their flowing robes of ſilk embroidered
" all over with diamonds, rubies, amethyſts,
" ſaphires, pearls, topazes and carbuncles
" (which I averred were to be purchaſed
" for a mere trifle in France) floated in the
" clouds, and exhibited a ſpectacle moſt

" glorioufly

" glorioufly gorgeous, and tranfcendantly
" illuftrious. In fine, I worked her up to
" fuch a pitch of enthufiafm, that fhe never
" once thought of the length of the way,
" or enquired whither I was taking her,
" until unfortunately my horfes took head,
" and her Ladyfhip, terrified at the velo-
" city with which they whirled us along,
" in attempting to leap from the phaeton,
" put her ancle out of joint.—It is the
" luckieft accident that could have hap-
" pened; for I dare fay fhe won't be able
" to ftir thefe two months."

" And where is fhe now?"

" At an inn in Wiltfhire; the hoftefs is
" a very good fort of woman and promifes
" to take care of her. I got her a furgeon
" before I left her, who with my affiftance,
" pulled the bone into the focket. I could
" not help pitying the poor Devil; fhe was
" in violent torture, and not a little ama-
" zed to find herfelf near thirty miles from
" Briftol; however, I appeafed her with
" apologies and affurances, that I had mif-
" taken the way. She entreated me, if

" poffible,

" poſſible, to procure an air balloon, to " carry her to Briſtol, which, " ſaid ſhe, " will be a mode of conveyance admirably " adapted to my preſent ſituation: be- " ſide, I ſhould like to have the credit of " being the firſt to introduce the faſhion " here. But theſe Engliſh are ſuch ſtupid " dolts, I doubt if you will be able to get " one.—I aſſured her, I ſhould exert my " utmoſt induſtry, and bade her farewel, " heartily rejoiced to be ſo well rid of her; " for ſhe is the moſt intolerable wretch— " the very princeſs of impertinence,—and " it is a ſhocking grievance, that polite- " neſs won't ſuffer us to thruſt a gag in " the mouths of ſuch common nuiſances " to ſociety, as never open them but to " torment and annoy their unfortunate fel- " low creatures! However, you may make " yourſelf perfectly eaſy about her, for I " have diſpatched a ſervant to Sir Hum- " phry, to let him know where ſhe is."

Indeed, worthleſs and tormenting as ſhe is, I cannot forbear regretting ſhe has ſuf- fered ſo ſeverely on my account, though

any

any thing that confines her to the houſe, will be a great conſolation to me.

Adieu—when I next write, I hope I ſhall be able to inform you, that Bloomfield is gone, and that I am again at peace.

DELIA.

LETTER XCI.

Mrs. Wentworth to *Julia*.

FLY, my dear Julia, the inſtant you receive this letter, fly to Somerſetſhire, and, if poſſible, perſuade your brother to leave it; take him at leaſt from under the roof of Lord Archer. It is now too late to diſſemble; his departure is of the utmoſt conſequence to the repoſe of *both*. Cruel Bloomfield! has not my Delia already felt too ſeverely the conſequences of your fatal raſhneſs!—You, Julia, are my only hope: fly then, to the aid of your brother—to the reſcue of my dear unhappy friend!

H. WENTWORTH.

LET-

LETTER XCII.

Lady Archer to *Mrs. Wentworth.*

Mount Avon.

WHY, my deareſt Henrietta, am I united to a man thus tenderly attentive, thus fondly ſolicitous! were he negligent and unfeeling—nay, even harſh and tyrannical, leſs ſevere would be my ſufferings: my heart, then reconciled to its inſenſibility, would not thus inceſſantly repine at its own ingratitude—thus perpetually reſent as a crime, a weakneſs which is involuntary?

Bloomfield is ſtill here. What courſe can I purſue? How unavailing are my efforts to baniſh from my thoughts an object continually obtruded on my view! What am I to think of the tale of his madneſs? I perceive in his manners no traces of diſordered reaſon, but his looks—his voice—the inequality of his temper, now ſinking into gloom, and again melting into ſoftneſs.—A thouſand little inſtances demonſtrate

ſtrate a ſurviving tenderneſs; but could I have doubted it an accident which happened laſt night muſt have convinced me.

The candles were lighted in the drawing-room. Lord Archer and Seymor, who dined with us, were amuſing themſelves at cheſs; Revell walked careleſsly about the room, I ſat with little Delia in my lap, and Bloomfield took a chair oppoſite to mine: his countenance was expreſſive of the deepeſt melancholy—I was afraid to raiſe my eyes, as I obſerved that he looked earneſtly at me. My ſituation becoming intolerably painful, I was preparing to leave the room, when the child plucked a roſe from my boſom, and threw it on the floor. Bloomfield ſtarted from his ſeat, and flew to reach it to me. As he ſtooped, a picture which was tied round his neck, hung from his boſom; by an involuntary impulſe I turned eagerly to examine it, and beheld, with an emotion I cannot expreſs, the ſame I exchanged with him on our laſt fatal ſeparation. He looked at me, he perceived my confuſion, and the cauſe that occaſioned it.

Whilſt

Whilſt we both ſtood immoveable, Revell, attracted by the glitter of the diamonds, flew to Bloomfield and ſeized the picture, whilſt unable to ſtand. I ſunk trembling into my ſeat.

"Come," cried he to Seymor and Archer, "come and gratify your curioſity! "Behold the portrait of the fair incognita, "to whom our martial friend has vowed "eternal fealty."

"Hold!" cried Bloomfield, "hold— "on your life I charge you!—from the "moment you caſt your eyes on this pic- "ture, I vow to you perpetual hatred, and "the blood of either muſt anſwer for the "conſequences of your raſhneſs."

Revell looked aghaſt. "Forgive me, "Colonel," ſaid he, "your diſpleaſure, "without either the loſs of your friend- "ſhip, or the riſk of my own life, would "be a motive ſufficiently prevalent to in- "duce me to ſacrifice my curioſity, great "as I acknowledge it to be, to contem- "plate the beautiful Helen, whoſe tranſ- "cendant charms have thus faſcinated your "affections." "Helen,"

"Helen," replied Bloomfield, "was "a deteſtable adultereſs; the original of "this picture unites the chaſtity of Lu-"cretia, with the wiſdom of Portia: and "whilſt the ſweetneſs of her manners too "powerfully attracts our affection, the "dignity of her virtue awes us into reve-"rential ſilence!"

He ſtood ſome moments contemplating the picture, then paſſionately preſſing it to his lips, replaced it in his boſom, and haſtily left the room. Oh, Henrietta, why did this rebellious heart beat with an agitated tranſport at this confirmation of his tenderneſs!

Lord Archer and Revell gazed at each other.

"I have long ſuſpected it," ſaid Revell, "theſe ſober ſentimental fellows are "ever the greateſt enthuſiaſts in love; "they enjoy even its afflictions, and find "an inconceivable ſatisfaction in bewail-"ing the cruelty of their deſtiny,—accu-"ſing the perverſeneſs of the fates—and "execrating the barbarity of their flinty "hearted miſtreſſes." "Flinty,

"Flinty, indeed," ſaid Archer, "muſt "have been the heart that could reſiſt the "force of merit ſo ſuperior as our friend's. "Bloomfield poſſeſſes that refinement of "manners, and elegance of ſentiment; "that native delicacy of feeling, and thoſe "embelliſhments of cultivation, which "moſt peculiarly adapt him to the female "taſte, and muſt render him irreſiſtible to "a breaſt not totally unſuſceptible of ten-"der ſentiments."

Oh with what ſenſations did I liſten to my huſband, thus blindly juſtifying my tenderneſs for his rival!—I hid my face in the boſom of my little Delia, and as I again raiſed my eyes, I perceived thoſe of Seymor fixed on me with looks of the keeneſt penetration; I bluſhed violently, and he ſuddenly withdrew them. I know the ſuſpicions he conceived from Lady Mordaunt's hints are confirmed; as he aroſe to depart, he preſſed my hand with an air of tenderneſs and pity.

I am more unhappy than I have words to expreſs! My health ſuffers from the anxiety of

of my mind; but long accuſtomed to controul my feelings, I find the taſk much leſs difficult than if it was new to me.

Bloomfield ſometimes appears conſcious of the propriety of leaving this place; but when he ſpeaks of going, Lord Archer oppoſes his departure with a warmth which is irreſiſtible. He blames my coldneſs to Bloomfield, and accuſes me of inſenſibility to his merit: would to heaven there were any juſtice in the reproach!

I have this inſtant received a letter from Lady Harriot; ſhe tells me, her ſiſter Lady Wharton, is on her return from the South of France, and that it is ſcarcely expected ſhe can reach England, alive. She writes in the deepeſt dejection of ſpirits. Supply my place, my dear Henrietta; conſole her in her affliction, and help me to acknowledge ſome of thoſe unreturnable obligations which I owe this beloved and eſtimable friend.

Your letters* do not ſatisfy me; they

* The Letters alluded to, are omitted.

are

are ſhort, and there is an air of reſerve runs through them, which hurts me; you dwell on general ſubjects, and paſs lightly over thoſe which are neareſt to my heart. You purpoſely avoid throwing any light on the difficulties which perplex me. Henrietta, is this conduct kind? is it conſiſtent with your friendſhip? But forgive me—your conduct I know, is directed by your judgment—fear not then, that I can ever entertain a mean ſuſpicion of that friendſhip which has conſtituted the ſweeteſt and moſt permament ſatisfaction of my life.

DELIA.

LETTER XCIII.

Miſs Bloomfield to *Mrs. Wentworth.*

THE inſtant I received your letter, my dear Henrietta, I prepared with impatience to fulfil the injunctions it contained, and next morning ſet off for Bath. Immediately on my arrival, I was ſo fortunate as to get a lodging on the North Parade,

Parade, and diſpatched a ſervant with a meſſage to my brother—but going to a window a little afterwards, I ſaw him in the ſtreet with Lord Revell. He happened to look up—he ſaw me—they were both with me in an inſtant.

" This is indeed a moſt fortunate ren-
" contre," ſaid Revell.

" Dear Julia," cried Horatio, embracing me, " what was the occaſion of this
" unexpected expedition ?"

" A whim," ſaid I. " London is ſo
" ſtupid at this ſeaſon of the year, that I
" grew weary and determined to vary the
" ſcene a little."

" Then I hope you mean to continue
" here for ſome time," ſaid Revell.

" I hope not, my Lord," ſaid I; " I
" hope to prevail on my brother to accom-
" pany me into Glouceſterſhire, to viſit a
" relation of ours who reſides there. How-
" ever," continued I, addreſſing my brother, " as I know your determination of
" going to France, before the vintage is
" over, I will only require you to leave

" me

" me with our friend—you may then pur-
" ſue your intention, without any further
" impediment, and, indeed, you have no
" time to loſe."

Both looked diſpleaſed at this reply. We had tea, for it was evening; my brother was extremely grave, he ſcarcely uttered three words—but his ſilence was abundantly atoned for by the volubility of his companion, who was in uncommon ſpirits. After ſitting an hour, my brother reminded Lord Revell, that it was time to go. " But to-morrow morning, Julia," ſaid he, " you may expect a viſit."

" Not a *viſit*, I hope," ſaid I; " I have
" hired apartments for both; and I have
" too much dependence on your affection
" and politeneſs, to ſuppoſe you will ſuf-
" fer me to occupy them alone."

He looked half angry — " To-night,
" however," ſaid he, " I have promiſed
" Lord Archer a party at cheſs, and I
" cannot be ſo rude as to diſappoint him."

I was mortified at his weakneſs, and, I believe, bade him adieu with coldneſs; for

immediately after they left the houſe, he returned alone.

" Julia," ſaid he, placing himſelf beſide me and tenderly preſſing my hand, " I " cannot bear your diſpleaſure! — Your " friendſhip is the deareſt, almoſt the only " bleſſing I poſſeſs;—I muſt not forfeit it " —but why is my affection put to ſo ſe- " vere a teſt? for I ſee your deſign in " coming hither."

" I would, it is true," ſaid I, " induce " you, if poſſible, to leave a place in which " you can no longer continue conſiſtently " with your peace, or with your honour."

" Conſiſtently with peace, I can no " where ſtay—But in what reſpect is my " ſituation incompatible with honour?"

" How!" ſaid I, " is it no infringe- " ment of honour to cheriſh a paſſion for " the wife of another—and that other, a " generous unſuſpecting friend, who treats " you with affection, and entertains you " with cordiality at the very moment, per- " haps, that you are endeavouring to in- " jure him in the tendereſt point, and

" baſely

" baſely undermining him in the affections " of the woman he adores?"

" I endeavour to undermine Lord Ar- " cher in the affections of his wife!" cried he, riſing in great diſorder. " My greateſt " enemy—my moſt inveterate foe, never " dared to impute to me a crime ſo black " and atrocious, as is now laid to my " charge, by my friend! my ſiſter!"

" Miſtake me not," ſaid I, " it is an " error, not a crime I attribute to you. " Your breaſt glows with the love of vir- " tue, and honour is the favourite idol of " your ſoul; but paſſion and prejudice " ſupply you with a falſe and pernicious " caſuiſtry, with which you ſilence the " dictates of thoſe noble principles! — " Whom, you ſay, can you injure but " yourſelf? Are we then allowed to injure " ourſelves with impunity?—or is my " peace of no conſequence to you?—and " after ſuch repeated proofs of friendſhip, " you cannot doubt that it is entirely de- " pendent on yours.—But you may eter- " nally deſtroy the tranquility of a perſon

" far more dear to you. You love Lady
" Archer with a paſſion, perhaps, un-
" equalled: is an affection ſo fervent to be
" concealed from the object who inſpires
" it? Do not your manners and your looks
" avow this tenderneſs? and can you be
" ignorant that every indication of your
" paſſion is a ſolicitation for a return to
" it? a tacit one, it is true; but on that
" very account doubly dangerous, be-
" cauſe reſentment is ſilenced by delicacy.
" Delia once loved you;—ah, if you ſhould
" revive in her breaſt an affection, which,
" perhaps, was never entirely extinguiſhed
" —what muſt be the conſequences?—To
" her unceaſing anguiſh—to yourſelf eter-
" nal remorſe—and endleſs miſery and diſ-
" quietude to Lord Archer. The wretch
" who made a fruitleſs attempt on his pro-
" perty, will probably be condemned to a
" painful and ignominious death:—what
" then ſhould be the puniſhment of the
" man who violates the ſacred obligations
" of friendſhip and the rights of hoſpita-
" lity, by cruelly endeavouring to deprive

" him

"him of a bleſſing more dear than for-
"tune, fame or life."

He liſtened to me with impatience and emotion, and when I concluded—

"Oh, Julia," exclaimed he, "you "have ſtung me to the ſoul! Friendſhip "is ſaid to be ſoft and lenient—but yours "—but perhaps I had need of cauſtics, "and you are excellent at adminiſtering "them."

"Ah," ſaid I, "truth is often the ſe-
"vereſt cauſtic we can apply."

"In your hands it is, indeed, ſevere "and corroding!—However, you have "ſhewn me that my conduct is weak, and "I will convince you, that I am not ſo "ſunk and degraded as you may imagine "—that I have ſpirit to form a manly re-
"ſolution, and conſtancy to adhere to it. "But Lord Revell waits for me;—fare-
"wel—we ſhall meet to-morrow."

"You leave me in diſpleaſure," ſaid I.

"No, no, not in diſpleaſure, only a "little hurt.—You know it is the nature "of cauſtics to leave a ſmart—but adieu—
"adieu."

He left me, and impatient to inform you of my operations, I have ſcribbled thus far. I have no doubt of effecting my deſign, and hope in my next to inform you of his departure. Farewel, my amiable friend—I ſhall write again immediately, and acquaint you of every incident that occurs.

Your's, ever,

JULIA BLOOMFIELD.

LETTER XCIV.

Miſs Bloomfield to *Mrs. Wentworth.*

THIS morning Lord and Lady Archer, Lord Revell and my brother came together to viſit me. Delia, I think, is much altered ſince I ſaw her at Bloomfield; ſhe looks thin and pale—ſhe is leſs handſome; but whilſt ſhe retains that bewitching ſweetneſs of countenance and manners, ſhe cannot be leſs amiable. She and Lord Archer preſſed me to accompany them to Mount Avon, and remain with them

them during my continuance in Somerſetſhire.—I obſerved, indeed, that her entreaties were much leſs warm than thoſe of his Lordſhip, which I place to my brother's account;—though he may now perhaps be indifferent to her, it is natural to imagine, that his preſence muſt lay her under a diſagreeable reſtraint; and yet from that line of your letter, in which you ſay, the happineſs of both depends on my brother's departure; I ſhould fear it is not. However, on this point, I cannot cenſure your reſerve; we have no right to divulge the ſecrets of our friends, any farther than may be abſolutely eſſential to the preſervation of their peace.

To-morrow evening the Earl of L——, whoſe ſeat is ſituated midway between Bath and Briſtol, gives a maſked ball—Lord Archer preſented me a ticket, which at firſt I declined accepting. "As the ſeaſon "is already ſo far advanced," ſaid I, "I "am unwilling to defer my brother's de-"parture a ſingle day."

"You are extremely obliging," ſaid Horatio, with an air of pique; "but I have "no intention of going until after to-"morrow."

As I could not determine to perſecute him with freſh expoſtulations, I accepted the ticket, and the party was agreed on. Delia, indeed, expreſſed great repugnance to it, but her objections were over-ruled by Lord Archer. I conſented to go home and ſpend the day with them; Lord Revell propoſed a walk to the pump-room; he, Lord and Lady Archer and I went together—my brother did not come with us. We had ſcarcely entered the room, when to my inexpreſſible ſurprize, I ſaw my old perſecutor, Lord Elwood, at my ſide.

"My dear Julia," cried he, catching my hand, "how could you be ſo cruel as "to leave London, without acquainting "me with your determination?"

"Really, my Lord," cried I, mortally enraged at his forwardneſs, "I never un-"derſtood it was a part of my duty to ac-"quaint you with my movements."

"As

"*As yet*, I acknowledge it is not," ſaid he; "but though I could not exact it as a "duty, I thought I might without pre- "ſumption have hoped it as a favour. I "have had ſuch a ſolitary journey in pur- "ſuit of you! How agreeably ſhould we "have made it together."

"Believe me, my Lord, mine was much "more pleaſing than it could have poſ- "ſibly been, had you been my companion."

"Ah, now you flatter me, my dear "creature," cried he, with a coxcomical air; "nothing delights me ſo much as be- "ing abuſed by the ladies!"

"I believe then, my Lord, that is a ſa- "tisfaction you very often enjoy."

"Why yes—ſometimes any thing but "killing cold indifference:—but, thank "heaven, pique and chagrin are no ſymp- "toms of that."

Was any thing ever ſo intolerable! Vexation tied my tongue. Had he really been my lover I could almoſt have forgiven him; but what provoked me the moſt was to ſee that Revell grew grave and angry. Is it

not the greateſt inſult to my underſtanding to imagine me capable of feeling a partiality for ſuch a monſter of impudence? I was almoſt equally angry with both; I knew not what to ſay. Had I aſſumed the appearance of gaiety and good humour, Elwood would have inſinuated that my ſpirits were exhilirated by his preſence. I continued ſullenly ſilent; but a moment afterwards he took an opportunity to apologiſe in a whiſper loud enough to be heard by the reſt of the company, for not joining my party one evening that he had ſeen me at Vauxhall (the only time, indeed, I ever ſaw him from the day Revell left London.) "I was obliged to eſcort a ſet of "my country Couſins, "continued he," "and had they miſſed me for an inſtant, "there had been ſuch a hue and cry raiſed "that I could not have appeared in pub-"lic for an age.

"I hope my Lord you have prevailed "on them to accompany you hither?"

"Why ſo?—why do you wiſh me to be "tormented with ſuch aukward wretches, "ſuch dancing bears?" "In

"In hopes they would engroſs your "time and attention, and prevent your "waſting them on a perſon ſo little con- "ſcious of the obligations as I confeſs "myſelf to be."

"Kind creature, how you flatter me! "you are really too condeſcending this "morning," cried he, laughing heartily. "—Upon my ſoul, I never ſaw you look "half ſo handſome. You muſt allow me "to make you angry ſometimes: you can't "conceive what a charming brilliancy "your eyes and complexion receive from "it!" "I have heard, indeed," ſaid Lord Archer, "that ſome ſavage animals re- "ceive additional ſublimity from rage: it "is ſaid to render the colours of the "ſerpent more reſplendent and glorious, "and to brighten the ſpots of the leopard; "but I could never imagine it heightened "the beauty of the female appearance."

"Why not as well as that of the creatures "you have juſt referred to?"

"Becauſe there are ſome natural diſ- "tinctions between a lady and a ſerpent or

" leopard. The deſtinations aſſigned them
" by nature appear to me to be widely dif-
" ferent; and the ferocity which encreaſes
" the beauty of the latter animals, deprives
" the former, whoſe charms conſiſt in
" ſoftneſs and gentleneſs, of all her at-
" tractions."

" A very ingenious compariſon indeed!" ſaid Lady Archer.

" I do not aſſert," ſaid Elwood, " that
" the ſimilitude is to be found in the ſex
" in general; but that many individuals
" have a near affinity with the ſerpent and
" leopard is indiſputable—It was doubtleſs
" this congeniality of diſpoſition which
" gave riſe to the tender connection, which,
" as Holy Writ informs, was formed in
" Paradiſe between Grandame Eve and the
" ſerpent, to whom her partiality became
" ſo unbounded, that ſhe preferred his ad-
" vices to the command of her huſband
" and the prohibition of her Maker.—But
" their reſemblance to the leopard renders
" them ſtill more irreſiſtible. There is
" nothing ſo inſipid and diſguſting as the

" *ſang*

" *ſang froid* we ſometimes meet with in the " ſex. Mr, Burke, I think, obſerves that " thoſe objects which excite terror are ſub- " lime :—now as nothing is more terrible, " ſo conſequently nothing is more ſublime, " than a woman of ſpirit. What wonder " then if I, who poſſeſs a ſtrong admira- " tion of this great and elevated turn of " mind, ſhould be irreſiſtibly attracted by " the ſublimity of Miſs Bloomfield's cha- " racter."

Revell looked extremely angry at this ironical ſpeech.

" If I may judge from your counte- " nance, my Lord," reſumed the impertinent wretch, addreſſing him, " you too " are in ſome degree related to the leopard; " I think I trace ſomething of a family " reſemblance, particularly in the glare of " your eyes."

Revell grew warm and was going to reply, when Lady Archer, who appeared apprehenſive of the conſequences, interpoſed.

" I think, " ſaid ſhe," his Lordſhip " pays you a high compliment; he plainly " inſinuates

" insinuates that Miss Bloomfield and you " are congenial minds, and he who ap- " pears so greatly charmed with spirit in " the feminine, must admire it yet more " in the *masculine* character." " That I " greatly doubt," replied Revell, " spirit " in a woman, one especially with whom " we are unconnected, resembles those " little harmless coruscations which dazzle " and amuse at a distance;—but in a man " it is a lightning which may blast and " scorch us."

" Your distinction is perfectly just," replied Elwood; " I candidly acknowledge " I admire it a thousand times more in " Miss Bloomfield than in your Lord- " ship, in whom it assumes an aspect ra- " ther too frightfully sublime to be very " attractive.—Methinks I begin already " to feel myself singed by those lightnings " you speak of—and I believe it will be " my wisest course to decamp before I ex- " perience any greater inconvenience.— " So, my Lord, your most obedient.— " Ladies, *bon jour*." Then returning a

few

few ſteps—" Ladies, if you wiſh to ſee a " grand dance of ſpectres exhibited, come " by all means to the Briſtol Aſſembly " to-night. You would abſolutely ima- " gine that the King of Terrors had refun- " ded his prey and gratified his captives " with a Saturnalia. It is the moſt enter- " taining ſpectacle you can conceive, and " I can't help admiring the wonderful for- " bearance of the crows. Miſs Bloom- " field, that you mayn't be neceſſitated to " dance with a ghoſt, I ſhall expect the " honour of your hand."

" I thank your Lordſhip; but I ſhould " prefer a ghoſt to a devil, at all times."

" Ha, ha, ha! well done Julia! well, " it muſt be confeſſed, that I am a dear " provoking devil, ſo adieu!"

" Who is he?" ſaid Lady Archer.

" One of our young men of quality," ſaid Revell, " whoſe vice and licentiouſ- " neſs reflect a diſgrace on elevated ſtation; " I was provoked at his treatment of Miſs " Bloomfield, and if I had imagined my " intervention would have been agreeable

" to

" to her, would have chaſtiſed him for " his inſolence."

" You acted much more prudently," ſaid I, diſpleaſed at his words, and the intimation they contained, " on your own " account, as well as mine. When I wiſh " to have my quarrels reſented, your Lord- " ſhip is not the perſon to whom I ſhall " apply."

" I believe, indeed, no perſon would be " beheld in a very favourable light, who " preſumes to interfere between you and " Lord Elwood."

" I fancy," ſaid Lady Archer, ſmiling; " I fancy diſcord has waved her infernal " brand amongſt us; for I can ſee no cauſe " for any diſſention—but tell us, Julia, if " Lord Elwood be a favourite of yours, " how do you treat thoſe you diſlike?"

" For my part," ſaid Lord Archer, " I " was greatly entertained with this ſwain " of yours, Miſs Bloomfield; he appears " to be quite an original; and I could not " forbear admiring the dexterity with " which he turned Revell's reſentment " to a jeſt." " *Effrontery*,

"*Effrontery*, you ſhould call it,"—ſaid Revell; "but I ought to entreat Miſs "Bloomfield's pardon for applying ſo ſe-"vere an epithet to his Lordſhip."

"Miſs Bloomfield," returned I, "is "perfectly indifferent what epithets his "Lordſhip or your Lordſhip may beſtow "on each other, ſo long as ſhe is permit-"ted to remain unconcerned in your con-"teſts."

Thus ended our converſation, which Revell took ſo greatly in dudgeon, that he opened not his lips until we reached Mount Avon. At dinner, we were joined by Mr. Seymor and my brother. I believe, indeed, his Lordſhip would have condeſcended to have been reconciled to me, if I had given him any encouragement: but determined to let him ſee that I am not to be offended with impunity, I kept him at bay, and we are now on worſe terms than ever. Yeſterday evening, indeed, if there had been any opening, I would have gratified him with a full and true account of the mutual enmity between me and Elwood, and its riſe and progreſs,

progreſs, which would have effectually ſecured him againſt jealouſy for the future; but I had no opportunity, and I thought it would appear too particular to ſeek one; beſide, my attention was engroſſed by a matter of more conſequence.

I did not know how to account for my rencontre with Elwood; for ſpiteful and malignant as he is, I could not conceive that the rancour of his perſecuting ſpirit was ſo violent, as to drive him to Bath after me. However, Mr. Seymor, on hearing his name mentioned, ſolved the enigma. It ſeems he has been in Briſtol theſe ten days, though he paid me the compliment to tell me, he came from London in purſuit of me—but he has game of a different nature in view—the heireſs of a London citizen, prodigiouſly wealthy, who, with an old maiden, Methodiſt aunt, left London to ſpend the ſeaſon there.—I wiſh I knew the lady—It would be delightful to counterwork him in his matrimonial ſcheme, as I have already done in one of a nature but little more baſe and diſhonourable.

This

This would be the infallible means of effecting the total diſcomfiture of the enemy at one blow—for I know his finances are reduced to ſuch a deplorable ſtate, that he cannot ſtand his ground two months, unleſs relieved by a ſupply.—I have it! I'll write an anonymous letter to the young lady's guardian, who is a Mercer on Ludgate-hill!—(a mere old Jew—I have been in his ſhop an hundred times!) to apprize him of the honour intended his ward, by Lord Elwood, whoſe character and circumſtances I ſhall not fail to blazon, and ſet forth with all the eloquence I am miſtreſs of. I am delighted with the idea, and will execute my project before I ſleep. Then the action will be ſo meritorious; I am abſolutely a female Quixote, going about reſcuing diſtreſſed and deluded damſels from the clutches of this infernal harpy—this devil incarnate. Revell was not preſent when I received from Mr. Seymor the intelligence I am on the point of making this laudable uſe of;—for as ſoon as we quitted the dining-room, he took a book and

went

went into the garden—to mortify my vanity, I ſuppoſe, by ſhewing how little value he ſet on my ſociety. Mr. Seymor took notice of the alteration of his humour.

"What ails Revell to day?" ſaid he; "I never ſaw a fellow ſo altered; he was "all ſpirit and gaiety at breakfaſt this "morning: but now you can't get a word, "except an odd monoſyllable; he ſhuts up "his mouth and looks—"

——"So wondr'ous grim,
"His very ſhadow durſt not follow him!"

"Perhaps," ſaid Lord Archer, "Miſs "Bloomfield can explain the riddle."

"Oh ho! this is the Lady he purſued "to London on the wings of love; and to "reward his affection, ſhe is playing the "coquette. Well, I have always obſerved "that ſenſible men are evermore the greateſt "dupes in love affairs; it is the ſtudy "of your ſex to make fools of ours; but "thoſe generally eſcape the beſt, in whom "nature has anticipated your work."

"Pray,"

"Pray," ſaid Lady Archer, "where is "Lord Manſell at preſent?"

"There now! no ſooner can a fool be "mentioned, than from a concatenation "of ideas, by no means to his advantage, "my poor friend Manſell muſt be lugged "in. However, I can tell you to your "mortification, that your rejection of his "homage, made no very deep impreſſion "on his heart; for in three weeks after we "left Ireland, he was violently in love "with another lady—and one too of no "very elevated rank, being the relict of "a banker in the city. Neither were her "perſonal attractions altogether irreſiſtible, "having a pearl on one eye, and not a "tooth in her head. It is true, this fair "Atalanta in her mortal race, had ga-"thered a certain golden fruit, vulgarly "called a plum—a fruit more highly in "vogue amongſt the children of this gene-"ration, than were the Heſperian apples in "days of yore; and this was ſaid to be the "taliſman by which ſhe captivated the "wiſhes of obſequious crouds of kneeling "adorers." "And

"And did your friend," ſaid I, "bear "off the golden prize from ſo many ri-"vals?"

"Alas! no—The mind of our beauti-"ful relict in her younger days, had been "deeply tinctured by the pernicious doc-"trines of Whitfield. Now it unfortu-"nately happened, that juſt as my friend "was on the eve of triumphing over every "other competitor, an opponent more "dangerous than any he had hitherto com-"bated, ſprang up to oppoſe him in the "form of a Methodiſt Preacher. Long "was this contention, and dubious was its "event. The fair widow ſuffered theſe "rival candidates to plead their cauſes al-"ternately, with all the candour of an "impartial Judge. The Peer ſighed and "ogled—the Preacher groaned and ſquin-"ted—the Peer plied her with ſongs and "epigrams—the Preacher attacked her "with texts and commentaries—the Peer "repreſented to her in the ſtrongeſt co-"lours, the ſplendid ſtation and elevated "rank ſhe ſhould ſecure to herſelf, by his

"alliance;

" alliance;—but the Preacher put a finiſh-
" ing ſtroke to the controverſy, by poſi-
" tively aſſuring her, that if ſhe ſuffered
" her conduct to be influenced by ſuch car-
" nal conſiderations, ſhe muſt infallibly
" forfeit the reſplendent and permanent
" glories of the New Jeruſalem, take her
" ſtation amongſt the goats, and with them
" to be delivered over to the tormentors;
" to be conſigned to that place of horror
" and tribulation, where there is wailing
" and gnaſhing of teeth, unceaſing and
" eternal. My poor friend, incenſed to
" find himſelf thus ouſted by a ſcoundrel
" Methodiſt Preacher, flew off in a rage
" to the Continent, and I have never ſeen
" him ſince."

As I have often heard you ſpeak of this Lord Manſell, I thought you would not be diſpleaſed with this anecdote; I beg you will communicate it to the Dean, who, I am ſure, will enjoy it.

In the evening my brother accompanied me to Bath in Lord Archer's chariot; on the way he was gloomy and ſilent. He did

did not mention Lady Archer. However, I am convinced he will leave Somerſetſhire, though perhaps not quite ſo ſuddenly as I could wiſh. And now, Madam Propheteſs, what am I to think of your fine predictions and prognoſtications?—Here are Revell and I, who in the main, like each other extremely well, at variance already; and it is the very ſimilitude of temper you have remarked, which, inſtead of uniting us, make us diſagree. Revell, proud, impetuous and captious.—Julia impatient, indignant, tolerably pert and ſomewhat of a coquette—no, no, it will never anſwer! It is highly improbable that two minds ſo eccentric will ever meet at the matrimonial point; at the moment that his inclinations may be fixed there, mine may, perhaps, be wandering through the frozen regions of eternal virginity—and *vice-verſa*. In good truth, I know not how to diſpoſe of myſelf; accuſtomed from my infancy to have no law but my own inclinations, I fear I ſhall never be able to bend my ſtubborn neck to the galling yoke of wedlock, and I equally

equally deſpair of ever becoming an ornament to the ſingle ſtate, like that paragon of antient maidenhood, the good Aunt Sophy, with her ſhell-work and ſilk-worms, and plaiſters and cataplaſms.

All to-morrow morning I ſhall be buſily employed getting my dreſs made—and to puniſh Revell for his miſdemeanours, the character I have fixed on, is that of the Goddeſs of Chaſtity; a ſort of emblematical device, by which I mean to chaſtiſe the petulance and diſcountenance the hopes of this miſcreant, if he has ſtill the preſumption to entertain any.

I am exceedingly ſplenetic this evening, and diſſatisfied with Revell, my brother, and, what is ſtill worſe, with myſelf. If the amuſement of to-morrow night does not put me into good humour, I fear I ſhall be ſeized with a fit of devotion, like the French ladies, and retire from the world whilſt I can make my exit with an eclat. Adieu, until after to-morrow.

Your's, ever,

JULIA BLOOMFIELD.

LETTER XCV.

Miſs Bloomfield to *Mrs. Wentworth.*

I HAVE a great deal to ſay to you, my dear Henrietta; but to begin with what will give you moſt pleaſure—my brother is gone, and I remain in Somerſetſhire.—There has been ſome variety in my exiſtence ſince I wrote laſt;—I have both laughed and wept—indeed, at preſent I am more inclined to ſorrow than to mirth.—However, I will try to give you an account of laſt night's amuſement—it may baniſh more diſpleaſing reflections.

As we had ſix miles out of town to go, Lord and Lady Archer wanted us to dreſs at Mount Avon, and go with them; but my brother, for what reaſon I knew not, declined the propoſal. When aſked what character he intended to aſſume, he ſaid he believed he ſhould take that of an Indian Chief. However, he changed his intention (if it was his intention) next morning, and ſent for the habit of a Monk. We left Bath

Bath at ſeven in the evening, and got to Lord L—'s, about eight. There was already a good deal of company, and figures of every deſcription, in general better dreſſed than ſupported; however, the rooms were elegant, the muſic good, and the ſpectacle altogether brilliant, gay and animating.

As I looked around, my eyes were aſſailed with a figure in the habit of a ſhepherd— but ſuch a ſhepherd as never was exhibited ſince the days of Polypheme! indeed, I raiſed my eyes to the elevated ſummit of his head, in the full perſuaſion that I ſhould there diſcover the ſingle glaring orb which diſtinguiſhed the Sicilian monſter.

His height was ſuch as would have entitled him to the command of the tall Pruſſian regiment, and his bulk was adequate to it. He wore a green ſattin jacket, ſtuck over with roſes; a pair of bagpipes depended from a broad red ribbon, which was tied round his neck; his treſſes which emulated not the ſhining jet, or poliſhed ebony

—nor yet the gloſſy blackneſs of the raven's plume, but rather the duſky hue which decorates the back of a kitchen chimney, hung to his ſhoulders, and were crowned with a garland of lillies interwoven with myrtle, and his broad phyſiognomy, which reſembled "the moon full orb'd," or riſing ſun, was partly eclipſed by a pretty little ſmirking effeminate maſk, which naturally enough reminded us of the tranſit of Venus, over the latter luminary; but the tawny hue of his natural phyſiognomy, two inches of which were diſcernable all around it, formed no very amiable contraſt with the tender bloom of his artificial one. He was accompanied by a ſhepherdeſs of an appearance as groteſque as his own: ſhe too was in green—the livery your ſhepherds and ſhepherdeſſes are generally condemned to appear in, her well powdered head, which ſhook with the palſy of age, was adorned with a little hat ſtuck on one ſide; another Arcadian ceremonial,—her long ſcraggy neck, which in colour emulated her ſhepherd's duſky cheek, ſhe generouſly

nerouſly exhibited to public view: on the top of her crook, which ſhe carried in her right hand, was fixed a chaplet of flowers; under her left arm ſhe bore an artificial ram with gilt horns; and a formidable belle-hoop, completed the figure of this *chef d' œuvre* of nature and art.—Deſirous to know if their converſation was as curious as their appearance, I approached them.

"Gentle ſhepherd," ſaid I, "tell me, "I entreat you, is there any juſtice in my "conjectures—art thou a deſcendant of "that famed Sicilian goat-herd, whoſe "paſſion for the cruel, but beautiful Ga-"latea, inſpired thoſe tender and elegant "lays which have been tranſmitted to poſ-"terity?"

"Me deſcended from a goat-herd!" exclaimed the ſhepherd, in a tone which inſtantly announced him my dear Henrietta's countryman; "I'd have you to know, the "family of the Fogarty's was never diſ-"graced by any ſuch ſpalpeens! I believe "I have better blood in my veins, than

" yourſelf, although you are ſo fine with
" your half-moon ſtuck in your forehead.
" A goat-herd, indeed!"

" Lord! Amyntor," ſaid the ſhepherdeſs,
" you don't enter into the ſpirit of the en-
" tertainment!—Don't you perceive it is
" the bright Diana, who addreſſes you?"

" Not I, by my conſcience; how the
" devil ſhould I know who ſhe is, when I
" never ſet my eyes on her before! Though
" may be, I might know her well enough,
" if it was not for that vizard on her face;
" for I'm ſure if I was to be ſeen at Caſtle
" Fogarty, in this figure you have made
" me make of myſelf, my own born bro-
" thers and ſiſters would take me for a
" ſhowman or a mummer."

" Fair Cynthia," cried a magnificent Turk, who juſt then approached us, " no
" longer waſte thy ſilver ray on this un-
" feeling ruſtic—turn and cheer me with
" thy gentle ſplendours!"

" Unfeeling ruſtic! faith, this is of a
" piece with the goat-herd! By my ſoul,
" if I had known your maſquerades were
" ſuch

" ſuch unmannerly places, inſtead of this " little bit of a bagpipe, its a good Shi- " lealah, I'd have brought with me."

My attention was now ſtrongly attracted by four figures, who entered in a groupe. The principal one was a fine and ſtriking repreſentation of Time. The maſk was admirably executed; in his right hand he held a ſcythe, and in his left an hour glaſs. He crept along with a ſlow and ſilent pace; but as ſoon as he had paſſed us, we perceived a large pair of pinions, which to the front were inviſible. He was followed by Age, a little decripid figure with hoary locks, and a long ſilver beard; and a lovely boy and girl, whoſe golden locks were interwoven with roſeate wreaths, flew inceſſantly before his ſteps. Theſe were the emblems of Youth and Beauty.—As he advanced, he threw ſcrolls of paper amongſt the croud, on which theſe lines were written.

" Ye votaries of faſhion who laviſh your prime
" In fruitleſs endeavours to murder old Time;
" Who with this intention aſſemble to-night,
" (Though he ſees through your malice and laughs at your ſpite)

" yourſelf, although you are ſo fine with " your half-moon ſtuck in your forehead. " A goat-herd, indeed!"

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" Who with this intention aſſemble to-night,
" (Though he ſees through your malice and laughs at your ſpite)

" In propria perſona, behold him appear,
" Your wrongs to redreſs, and petitions to hear,
" —Yet wherefore this rancour?—why are you *his* foes,
" Who ſooner or later diſpels all your woes?
" Do the ſubjects of Hymen repine at their lot?
" Like the great Alexander, I ſever the knot.
" Do importunate creditors teaze you with duns?
" Or old covetous miſers torment their young ſons?
" They all bend at my footſtool, acknowledge my power,
" And I mow them away with my ſcythe like a flower!
" For each human evil, I bring you a cure,
" Which, though ſometimes 'tis ſlow, is yet certainly ſure.
" Whene'er I approach you to give good advice,
" Ye aſſault me with cards, or annoy me with dice.
" With dreſſing and dancing you drive me away:
" And how oft am I poiſoned with ſcandal and tea!
" Whilſt others, with equally wicked deſign,
" Strive to ſcorch me with love, or to drown me in wine.
" To the fanes of falſe honour her votaries throng,
" And butcher each other, *pour tuer les temps!*
" Whilſt abroad to deſtroy me ſuch multitudes roam,
" The wiſe and the happy enjoy me at home:
" I approach thoſe bleſt mortals with down on my feet,
" And old Age, when they meet him, looks placid and ſweet.
" Then take Time by the fore-lock whilſt with you, and learn
" That when once he is gone, he will never return."

The general curioſity was excited, and every one flocked around this friendly monitor.

" O thou great diſcoverer of all events," ſaid I, " anticipate thy intelligence, and " let me know my future deſtiny."

" Thou

"Thou art a coquette," replied he, "and when theſe fugitives," pointing to youth and beauty, "abandon thee, and "that I lead in my train the penſive hours "of reflection, thou ſhalt regret but too "ſenſibly the folly of having trifled with a "worthy heart."

"Ha, ha, ha! very good, egad!" cried a little effeminate figure, in the habit of a ſailor. "Poor Dian! ſtill doomed to be "a fuſty old maid. I ſuppoſe you deſpaired "of getting a huſband in heaven, and are "come in ſearch of one amongſt us terreſ-"trials. Don't you repent your cruelty "to Acteon?"

"Beware," ſaid the Turk, "leſt, by "exciting the indignation of the Goddeſs, "you ſhare his puniſhment."

"Oh no, egad, as I do not intend to "take the Goddeſs to wife, I am in no "pain about my temples. 'Horns, horns 'I defy ye.' "But come, old Baldpate! "let me too have a peep into futurity. "What ſucceſs ſhall I have in my next "voyage?"

" All your former voyages," replied Time, " have been on the Thames, but " your next will be of a nature leſs agree- " able: it will be made *nolens volens* to the " colonies."

The ſhepherdeſs and her gentle ſwain approached us. " What old mower is " this you have got amongſt you, telling " of fortunes here? Now amongſt us, no- " body would liſten to a ſyllable that " came out of his mouth, unleſs he was " both deaf and dumb."

This bright obſervation created univerſal mirth.

" What the devil are ye all grinning " at! I'll tell you what it is, my dear; " you had better leave off your conjuring " and ſtick to your mowing, or may be " you may get yourſelf tied to a cart's tail."

The ſhepherdeſs, who had by this time diſcovered his miſtake, plucked him by the ſleeve, and informed him, that the perſo- nage he took for a fortune-teller, was no other than Time.

" O, I

"O, I beg your worſhip's pardon, Mr. "Time," ſaid he; "you are the old rogue "that are always a plaguing me with your "company, whenever I'm alone by my-"ſelf, and a running away from me, when "I'd be glad to keep you along with me."

"Tell me, O Time," ſaid the beauti-"ful nymph, "what is to be my fate?"

"Fair flower," replied he, "thou ſhalt "ſhortly be tranſplanted to the Bog of "Allen."

"By my ſoul, but ſhe ſhan't, though:" cried the ſweet ſwain; "you are out in "your politics there, old boy; ſhe ſhall "go to Caſtle Fogarty, in the Barony of "Eliogarty, in the ſweet County of Tip-"perary, and that's better than all the "Bogs of Allen, in England and Ireland "put together."

During this converſation, old Age, who had marked the fair ſhepherdeſs, for his prey, ſtole ſoftly behind her, and laid his hands on her ſhoulders. This manœuvre was inſtantly comprehended by every one, and a general laugh enſued.

The lady, highly enraged to find herſelf thus unexpectedly the captive of Age, turned, and in very angry terms deſired him to quit his hold.

" My victims are delivered to me by " Time," replied he, " and they are no- " vices indeed, who are ignorant that I " never relinquiſh my prey."

" Faith, but you ſhall," cried the ſhep- herd; " or I'll be after plucking off that " white beard of your's, my dear. I'll " teach you to ſeize ladies by the ſhoulders " like a catch-pole, I warrant you!"

" He is a vile old ruffian," cried the lady," and I ſhall get him turned out of " the rooms."

" That will be impoſſible," replied Age, " whilſt you remain in them. Where- " ever you go, I ſhall continue your in- " ſeparable, and, only whilſt you wear a " maſk, your *unſeen* attendant."

My attention was called off by a very elegant devil.

" Goddeſs of the ſilver bow," ſaid he, " art thou invulnerable to temptation?

" In

"In ſome forms," replied I, "perhaps I am not. But ſurely a devil of any ſagacity would not have aſſumed an appearance, which, 'to be hated, needs 'but to be ſeen.' When the ſerpent beguiled the mother of mankind, he dazzled her ſight, and captivated her ſenſes, with glittering folds and glowing colours; how ſhould her innocence and purity have been alarmed, had he preſented himſelf to her eyes in his native deformity!"

"True," replied Satan, "but do her daughters now retain that purity and innocence, which ſhrink from the approach of evil? Our modes of temptation muſt be accommodated to the prevailing ſentiments of the times; the maſk of hypocriſy, which may be requiſite in one age, in the ſucceeding is thrown aſide as unneceſſary; and as I have long obſerved that thoſe vicegerents of mine on earth, who moſt ſtrongly reſemble me, are generally the reigning favourites of the ladies, I imagined, that by appearing in

"my

" my proper perſon, I ſhould inſtantly ac-
" quire a complete aſcendant over the fe-
" male world."

He could not ſo effectually diſguiſe his voice, as to prevent me from knowing it was Revell. I was incenſed at his ſeverity.

" Your ſentiments," replied I, " con-
" vince me you are no impoſtor, as at firſt
" I ſuſpected; for falſhood and malignity
" were ever of infernal extraction."

" I wiſh," replied he, " I could return
" your compliment. Deceived by your
" appearance, I was at firſt induced to be-
" lieve you the divinity you perſonate;
" but it fares with your ſex as it did with
" the animal, who aſſumed the ſkin of the
" lion; whilſt they continue ſilent, we
" ſuffer our reaſon to be deluded by ſpe-
" cious appearances—but their tongues
" diſſolve the charm, and nature thus
" kindly adminiſters the antidote with the
" poiſon." He turned from me abruptly, as he ſpoke, and clapping the ſhepherd on the ſhoulder, ſaid;

" Well,

"Well, my Hibernian, what news from "the Isle of Saints?"

"Why now what the devil have you to "do with saints? I'm sure they would not "be seen in your company, unless they "had you by the nose, as St. Dunstan had. "Upon my conscience, I wish I had known "you were to be here to-night, and I'd "have made a holy man of myself, for "your sweet sake, my dear; it would be "an excellent joke, to be pulling you "about after me by a pair of tongs, "i'faith!"

"There's no necessity for any additional "bond of union; the similarity of our "dispositions will prove a sufficient tie."

"A bond! Oh, is it that you are after "with your prate and palaver! Aye now, "I'll engage you want to wheedle me out "of a bond, and to make me sign it with "my own blood, and then cast a mist be-"fore my sight, to make me mistake the "figures, and such like cursed devilments! "but if you don't make off with yourself, "Mr. Beelzebub, I'll take you by the

"antlers

" antlers and ſwing you home to hell ſome-
" thing ſooner than you deſire to get
" there!"

" Who is this," ſaid Time, advancing,
" that preſumptuouſly uſurps my au-
" thority?"

" I diſclaim it," ſaid Satan, " none but
" this earth-born brood are ſubject to your
" ſway!"

We were interrupted by the entrance of a new group more curious, if poſſible, than any I have yet delineated. The principal figure was a female ſplendidly dreſſed, and placed in a ſort of chariot, magnificently decorated and adorned with an infinity of loves, and doves, and flames, and darts, and all the inſignia of the Cyprian Queen. Beſide it limped an old ſorrowful figure, whom I knew to be intended for Vulcan, and it was drawn by two little boys, with wings on their ſhoulders, quivers at their backs, and bandages over their eyes. Theſe, as you will ſuppoſe, were Cupids, whom the Goddeſs, finding the doves of this iſland leſs tractable than thoſe of Paphos, Cyprus,

prus, &c. had been neceſſitated to harneſs to her chariot. As I advanced to do her homage, I was ſurprized to hear her thus addreſs me.

" I know you well enough, Lady Ar-
" cher, but I was determined never to
" ſpeak to you as long as I live: to know
" the ſituation I was reduced to—on your
" own account too, and not to come near
" me!—How do you like my machine?
" Isn't it beautiful? I had it conveyed in
" a waggon from Briſtol—wasn't it an ad-
" mirable contrivance?—but when I got
" into the hall, the brutes would not let it
" in, becauſe I had not tickets for my
" Cupids; but you know, as I can't put
" my foot to the ground, I couldn't come
" without it,—ſo I was obliged to ſend for
" the Earl to come and make them—he
" admired it of all things—Oh, I had the
" moſt delightful project in my head, if I
" could but have got it executed! I ſent
" all over Briſtol for a philoſopher to con-
" ſtruct me an air-balloon—but there was
" not one in the city, and the ignorant
" wretches only laughed at me!" " No

"No wonder for them, Lady Mordaunt," exclaimed poor Vulcan; "no wonder for them! You are enough to set every one that liſtens to you, as mad as yourſelf!—I give Mr. Seymor no thanks for cramming you with ſuch improbable lies; ever ſince he has put this ſtuff into your head, you have run on with ſuch abſurdities, as would tire the patience of Socrates or Job! Nothing will ſerve you, forſooth, but driving off to France—purchaſing pearls and diamonds, by the buſhel, and flying thro' the air like a comet, with a blazing tail! You ſet every nerve in my body a working—you'll abſolutely be the death of me!"

"Hold your tongue, Sir Humphry—Vulcan, I mean—(for 'tis the height of vulgarity to call perſons by their proper names, at a maſquerade) hold your tongue, I ſay, and don't expoſe your ignorance and ruſticity! Mr. Seymor's too much a man of honour and quality, to deceive me—But does not every one know,

" know, that people frequently fly in the " air with balloons?—If others, why not " I? Ah, if I could but have got a little " one made for me, juſt the ſize of a tea- " board!—I could have covered it over " entirely with my hoop, and it would " have produced ſuch a divine effect, to be " ſent floating in at the window, to the " ſound of ſoft muſic.—How I ſhould " have enjoyed the admiration and aſtoniſh- " ment of the company below! They'd " have taken me for a Goddeſs in good " earneſt, whilſt I ſailed about over their " heads!—But you know there would have " been no danger of my falling; for the " inflammable air would have ſuſtained " me."—

" Suſtained a fiddle-ſtick," interrupted Vulcan, in a rage; " Good Lord, good " Lord! how your abſurdity tortures me! " I tell you, Lady Mordaunt, (Venus— " if you will have it ſo); I tell you, you " might to all intents and purpoſes, as well " get yourſelf tied to the tail of a paper " kite! to think that a balloon, the ſize

" of

" of a tea-board, with ſuch a body as you " attached to it, would be able to reſiſt " the force of gravity, and—"

" A body as I! why what ails me, pray? " —and as for gravity, you know it was " always my averſion, and that makes you " ſpeak of it. I ſee no good in living in " the world, if we are always to be grunt- " ing and groaning. Now amongſt the " French, I ſhall be quite in my element, " they are ſo ſprightly and volatile."

" You are talking arrant nonſenſe, Lady " Mordaunt; but this I can tell you, you " may prepare to pack up and go home " to Wood Park; for while I live to pre- " vent it (which, at the rate you torment " me, can't be long), you ſhall never get " to France, to purchaſe pearls and dia- " monds, with my money. A likely ſtory, " indeed! I don't know how they came to " be ſo plenty there!"

" I'm ſure, I have told you often enough " —but you are ſuch a clod pole! Don't " you know, that ſince there has been a

" com-

" communication opened with the Eaſt-
" Indies, by means of the balloons—"

" A communication opened with the
" devil—Lady Mordaunt!—I wiſh hear-
" tily there was, and that the balloons
" and their inventors were burning in hell's
" flames!—Lord, pardon me if it be a ſin,
" —but my poor head is ſplitting into ten
" thouſand pieces! Was there ever ſuch
" credulity! The voyages of Sinbad the
" ſailor—the flying horſe with a peg at his
" ear—and the valley of diamonds, were
" nothing to this! I wiſh Mr. Seymor had
" fixed on ſome other fool, to talk his
" nonſenſe to—and not ſent your wits a
" wool-gathering after ſuch a manner! I
" take it very unkindly of him, and ſo I
" ſhall let him know; very unkindly in-
" deed.—But his behaviour was all of a
" piece;—to fling you out of his phaeton,
" put your ancle out of joint, and leave
" you thirty miles off, at a ſtrange place,
" without ever enquiring whether you were
" dead or alive, from that day to this!"

" Ah,

"Ah, heavens! what do I ſee yonder?" interrupted the Cytherean Deity. "Is'nt "that man mountain Squire Fogarty, the "Iriſh fortune-hunter, that was married "laſt week to Miſs Penelope Hazlerig, "the hideous old tabby, with the great "fortune! Such a pair of originals—I "ſhall have fine diverſion with them.— "Fly, my Cupid's, fly! come Vulcan;— "Oh Lord, you don't ſupport your cha- "racter at all—you forget you are to be "lame, I believe."

A murmur now ran through the croud which fell back, to make way for two figures which entirely captivated the attention of every ſpectator. They were thoſe of Orpheus and Euridice. Orpheus wore a veſt of white ſpangled ſattin, the cloſeneſs of which diſcovered the moſt perfect ſymetry of ſhape; a robe of light azure floated looſely from his back, his hair fell to his ſhoulders, and his ſilver lyre hung ſuſpended on his arm; but the beauty and elegance of Euridice's appearance, were more than

"Painting

" —Painting can expreſs,
" Or youthful poets fancy when they love!"

Could *they* have ſuffered me to retain a doubt, the golden hair which flowed in rich luxuriance on her poliſhed boſom, would have convinced me, it was your lovely Delia. Every one contemplated them in ſilence, till Time advancing towards them

" Thrice welcome, my amiable friends," cried he, " whom I behold with ever new " delight—ye came hither to enjoy my ſo- " ciety, not with a wicked intent to de- " ſtroy and aſſaſſinate me like this croud " that ſurrounds us. Far from flying me " with abhorrence, and perſecuting me " with rancour, you receive me with com- " placency and employ me to the nobleſt " purpoſes. To you I utter no harſh " rebukes, I addreſs no indignant re- " proaches."

" O thou," ſaid I, " whoſe captivating " ſtrains could ' ſoften rocks and bend ' the knotted oak!'—deign to captivate " our ſouls, and enchant our ſenſes with " thy extatic harmony!"

" Can

" Can the bright ſiſter of Apollo," he replied, " ſtoop from her ſilver ſphere (as " when impelled of old by ſtrong Circean " charms) to attend the wild warblings of " my ruſtic lyre; a lyre now only tuned to " charm one partial ear."

He ſeated himſelf as he ſpoke, and ſung the ſonnet I tranſcribe, which he accompanied with the moſt bewitching harmony.

The Sonnet.

" Thou magic lyre, whoſe faſcinating ſound,
" Seduc'd the ſavage monſters from their caves:
" Drew rocks and trees and forms uncouth around,
" And bade wild Hebrus huſh his liſtening waves;
" No more thy undulating murmurs flow,
" O'er Thracian wilds of everlaſting ſnow!

" Awake to ſweeter ſounds, thou magic lyre,
" And paint a lover's bliſs—a lover's pain—
" Far nobler triumphs now thy notes inſpire,
" For ſee, Euridice attends thy ſtrain:—
" Her ſmile a prize beyond the conqueror's aim,
" Superior to the laurelled wreaths of fame!

" From her ſweet brow to chace the gloom of care,
" To check the tear that dims her beaming eye;
" To bid her breaſt the riſing ſigh forbear,
" And flush her orient cheek with brighter joy.

" In

" In that dear breaſt ſoft ſympathy to move,
" And touch the ſprings of rapture and of love.

" Ah me! how long bewilder'd and aſtray,
" Loſt and benighted, did my footſteps rove;
" 'Till ſent by heaven to cheer the pathleſs way,
" A ſtar aroſe—' the radiant ſtar of love!'
" The God propitious joined our willing hands,
" And Hymen wreath'd us in his roſy bands.

" Yet not the beaming eye or placid brow,
" Or golden treſſes hid the ſubtle dart;
" To charms of a ſuperior race I bow,
" And nobler worth enſlaves my vanquiſh'd heart;
" The beauty, elegance and grace combin'd,
" Which beam tranſcendant from that angel mind!

" Whilſt vulgar paſſions—meteors of a day,
" Expire before the chilling froſts of age,
" Our holy flame, with pure and ſteady ray,
" It's glooms ſhall brighten, and its pangs aſſuage:
" By virtue (ſacred veſtal!) fed, ſhall ſhine,
" And warm our fainting ſouls with energy divine!"

As he ſwept the trembling chords with a maſter's hand, I felt myſelf tranſported to ſome bright fairy ſcene; the viſions of the antient fabuliſts appeared realized, and all was rapture, enchantment, deluſion! The company crouded round him ſuſpended in wonder and delight.

"I ſee," cried Time, "the poet ſtill "retains the faculty of attracting the "blocks and brutes."

"Egad, and ſo he does," ſaid the little freſh-water ſailor, "for you are at his "elbow! ha, ha, ha—there I have you on "the hip, old Bald-pate, ha, ha, ha—egad "that wasn't the worſt thing ever I ſaid."

"Oh, ho! brother tar," cried another ſailor, advancing, "I'm glad to find my-"ſelf along ſide of you. I heard as how, "that you had ſteered this courſe, and "I'se been tacking about, keeping a look "out for you. How many knots an hour "do you make in this ſame ocean? A ſtor-"my one I find it, as turbulent as the Bay "of Biſcay, damned full of ſhoals and "breakers, and I'se met more wizards and "devils than if I had been ſhipwrecked on "the rocks of Lapland.—Do, brother tar, "do ſteer me to ſome little creek or haven "where I may caſt anchor and take in freſh "proviſions, meſſmate!"

The perſon to whom this ſpeech was addreſſed, ſtood like a ſtatue, without comprehending a ſyllable of it. "Honeſt

"Honeſt friend," ſaid I, "your lan-
"guage is unintelligible to this impoſtor,
"who audaciouſly aſſumes the appearance
"of a ſon of Neptune."

"What! he hangs out falſe colours!
"a lubber, a ſneaking pitiful ſmuggling
"ſmack; but I'll laſh him up to the mi-
"zen-maſt as round as a robin—come
"along—I'll keep you in tow, till I make
"you an example to all freſh-water ſparks,
"that have the impudence to put on trow-
"ſers.—Don't think to ſheer off, once I
"ſtick my grappling-irons in your deck,
"you may ſtrike your flag if you were as
"rich as a galleon.—So come along, I
"ſay—come along!"

So ſaying, in ſpite of all the reſiſtance he could make, he hauled him away; how he diſpoſed of his prize, I know not, for I ſaw it no more, though the victor returned preſently afterwards.

To repeat all the converſations that paſſed, would fill a volume, and I fear I have already ſcribbled more than you will think worth reading. My brother, who had re-

tired to a receſs, where he ſat ſilent and abſtracted, on Euridice's appearance joined the company; during the dialogue of the ſailors, I ſaw him approach and addreſs her;—but their converſation was not long—he retired from her with precipitation, and, I perceived, with diſpleaſure. Lady Archer was ſoon afterwards taken ill; ſhe retired to a private room, where ſhe remained ſome time; indeed all the evening ſhe continued remarkably grave, and went away early. The entertainment concluded with a ball, but as I was extremely uneaſy on my brother's account, I prevailed on the ladies who accompanied us from Bath, to come away before two. During our little journey, he uttered not a ſyllable. When we got to our lodgings, he plucked off his maſk and flung himſelf into a ſeat.—He ſat gloomy and ſilent, but I perceived a violent perturbation of mind, which he endeavoured to reſtrain. I went to him and took his hand.

"I fear you are not well, my dear "brother?"

"Oh,

"Oh, yes," he replied, in a voice expreſſive of great emotion, "perfectly well! "I had a fooliſh weakneſs, that hung about "my heart—but now 'tis over—" then after a pauſe—"Good God! is it in human "nature to be ſo inconſiſtent? Is beauty "compatible with deformity? Vice with "virtue?—or is it in woman alone that "thoſe contrarieties are united?"—He ſtarted from his ſeat and traverſed the room with a haſty and agitated ſtep, then ſuddenly turning to me, "Julia, you will no "longer have occaſion to aſſume the cha-"racter of a cenſor: my own feelings ren-"der the taſk unneceſſary. It is true, I "long—too long, ſuffered myſelf to be the "dupe of an abſurd idea, a blind perſua-"ſion, that the affections of Delia were "alienated from me by artifice; but I "have now diſcovered the falſity of the "conjecture—I have heard from her own "lips, I have heard a confeſſion of her "crime!—thoſe perjured lips which in "the preſence of heaven!—but no matter "—yet to triumph in her own guilt and

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" my wretchedneſs!—to aggravate incon-
" ſtancy with ſcorn!—to blacken falſhood
" with calumny!—to load with unmerited
" invective, the wretch ſhe had undone!—
" But I deſerved it—weak and unmanly
" as I was, I deſerved it all!—Julia, bear
" with the infirmity of my temper—you
" ſee the laſt ſtruggles of an expiring paſ-
" ſion;—for can we love what we deſpiſe?
" To-morrow your wiſh will be gratified,
" to-morrow I will leave this place, I will
" go—I care not whither!—There was
" great room for your apprehenſions that
" I ſhould undermine Lord Archer in her
" affections!—to his merit, however, ſhe
" is juſt, and on his account alone I could
" wiſh her leſs deſpicable and unworthy.
" But no more of her—Were you well en-
" tertained?—I think Seymor's, the figure
" of Time, was admirable. Elwood too
" was there in a Turkiſh habit—did he ad-
" dreſs you?"—Then ſinking into a re-
verie, from which he ſuddenly ſtarted,
" *I cannot wiſh to be abſolved of crimes to*
" *which I am a ſtranger*—were not thoſe her
" words!

" words!—She would not have dared to
" utter ſuch a falſhood, but beneath a
" maſk.—Go, go to bed, my dear Julia.
" You weep!—why theſe tears?—Should
" you not rejoice at the emancipation of
" your brother?—Oh, Julia, if Delia had
" poſſeſſed but half your worth and good-
" neſs!—ſtrange and unnatural combina-
" tion!—the roarings of beaſts of prey—
" the hiſſings of ſerpents—the noiſe of en-
" venomed rattle-ſnakes, warn us to ſhun
" the coming evil—Is it woman alone that
" beneath the ſemblance of angelic inno-
" cence and purity, twines herſelf into the
" receſſes of the heart to ſting it to deſpair!
" —Go, my dear ſiſter, you are fatigued,
" go ſleep—for *you* can ſleep—and ſo ſhall
" I, I hope.—I muſt be up early to pre-
" pare for my journey—good night—good
" night!"

He ſnatched up a light and left me to the laſt degree confounded and amazed. That Delia has acknowledged a falſhood—confeſſed a crime of which ſhe is innocent—is this poſſible!—He is undoubtedly

in ſome unaccountable error; perhaps in her letters to you, Lady Archer may unravel the myſtery, to me inexplicable.

As I could not reſt till very late, I ſlept till twelve this morning. When I enquired for my brother, I heard he was gone to Mount Avon, and had left orders that every thing ſhould be in readineſs for his departure againſt two. At the appointed hour he returned, accompanied by Lord Revell; his air was penſive and dejected; but mild and affectionate. I was rejoiced to find him recovered from the perturbation of ſpirits, which the preceding night, had ſo greatly terrified me. He went into an adjoining apartment, whither I followed him: he turned when he ſaw me and tenderly embraced me.

"Julia," ſaid he, "my deareſt, kindeſt "friend, forgive the impatience with which "I liſtened to your remonſtrances, and "the petulance with which I replied to "them. I love you, Julia, with more "than paternal affection, and in your ab-"ſence you are yet more dear to me than

"when

" when you are preſent. I will make but
" a little tour, only through France, I be-
" lieve, and in October return to London,
" where I ſhall hope to meet you. Mean-
" time remain with Lord and Lady Ar-
" cher; the latter is not altogether un-
" worthy your friendſhip, though I have
" received within this hour a new proof of
" her inconſiſtence;—it was however of a
" nature more pleaſing. Lord Revell
" loves you, and is worthy your affection,
" do not trifle with a tenderneſs which will
" render you happy.—When we meet a
" faithful and generous heart, can we prize
" it too highly!"

We returned together to the drawing-room, but he only waited to embrace me once more and bid me adieu. Revell ſaid, he would ſee him mounted, they went off together. When I was alone, I indulged my melancholy, and ſuffered my tears, which in the preſence of Revell, I had endeavoured to reſtrain, to flow without controul. How depreſſing is it, my dear Henrietta, to behold the proſpects of a perſon

ſo infinitely dear to me thus utterly blaſted and deſtroyed!—for though time and abſence I hope will alleviate the anguiſh of my brother's mind, I am convinced it muſt retain to his lateſt exiſtence, ſtrong traces, if not of his unfortunate attachment, at leaſt of the melancholy of which it has been productive. It is true, as you ſay, I have no poſitive evidence of Lady Harriot's guilt, but my brother's letters muſt have been intercepted, and, who but ſhe could have had any temptation to ſuch a fraud? In a converſation I had with him ſince my return from Ireland, I diſcovered that it had been always cuſtomary with him to direct his letters to Delia, to her father's houſe in Dublin; none of thoſe he wrote previous to Mr. Bloomfield's ſecond marriage ever miſcarried—Ah, my dear friend, the treachery is too evident! and Lady Harriot is the wretch that has ſacrificed the peace of my deluded brother, to her ſelfiſh views—her deſpicable avarice! Heavens, how I abhor and deſpiſe her! Even her ſuperior underſtanding and inſinuating qualities

lities ſerve but to aggravate her crime and render it more deteſtable! for folly is the greateſt extenuation of guilt, and a mind ſo enlightened as hers, could not be unconſcious that truth is the baſis of every amiable and eſtimable virtue. I can ſcarcely repreſs my indignation when I hear Lady Archer expatiate on the perfections, and expreſs a filial affection for the monſter who has betrayed her—I fear to miſery!

I was interrupted in my meditations by Revell, who returned to me in a quarter of an hour after my brother's departure. He entered abruptly and ſurprized me in tears; he flew to me.

"You weep, amiable and affectionate "Julia," ſaid he, "you lament the de-"parture of the Colonel;—ah, is all the "tenderneſs of your heart abſorbed in your "fondneſs for that happy brother?"

"Would you then think it ſo great a "happineſs to be my brother?" ſaid I, endeavouring to recover my chearfulneſs.

"Heaven forbid I were united to you by "a tie, by which another, far more tender

" and endearing, muſt be for ever precluded. Julia, I love, I eſteem you! You are " the only unmarried woman in whom I " ever found a turn of mind adapted to my " taſte. I am conſcious your fortune might " entitle you to a more ſplendid alliance, " for I am far from being rich; but if I " conceived you to be capable of one ſordid " idea, I would renounce you for ever, " though poſſeſſed of millions: and I ſolemnly aver, if I have the leaſt knowledge of my own heart, that if I had " found you ungraced by rank and ungifted by fortune, it would be my pleaſure and my pride to raiſe you to the ſtation to which your merit entitles you. " It is true, I have injured my circumſtances, by my own extravagance, and my " paſt courſe of life has been far from being ſuch as, on reflection, I could approve; but I have been betrayed into " diſſipation, rather than ſunk in ſenſuality; " and like young Henry amongſt his reprobate companions, I deſpiſed the pleaſantry that allured, and the wit that ſe-

" duced

" duced me, at the moment that I ſuffered
" myſelf to be enſlaved by their faſcinations.
" But if friendſhip broke the ſpell, what
" miracles may you not expect from the
" influence of love? Neither was my re-
" formation the effect of a ſudden ſtart of
" caprice: I had acquired the knowledge
" of good and evil, and after ſeriouſly
" weighing the conſequences of both, the
" reſult of the compariſon was a ſtrong
" conviction of the ſuperior advantages of
" the former, even in reſpect to our tem-
" poral felicity. I offer myſelf to your
" acceptance with a fortune, which, tho'
" impaired, is not exhauſted; with a mind
" undepraved and a conſtitution unbroken.
" Anſwer me, Julia; treat me with frank-
" neſs and generoſity, and you may mould
" me into any form you pleaſe; but you
" will never by ill uſage degrade me into
" one of thoſe ſpaniel lovers, who crouch
" beneath the foot that ſpurns, and licks
" the hand that ſtrikes them."

If I could, my good friend, thought I, I would never exalt you into my lord

lord and maſter, you may take my word for it.

"Anſwer me, Julia," reſumed he, why "are you ſilent?"

"Leſt my tongue ſhould diſſolve the "charm," ſaid I, alluding to our converſation at the maſquerade, "and I find the "effects of the poiſon ſo pleaſant, that I "don't wiſh to adminiſter the antidote "very ſuddenly."

"Malicious girl," ſaid he, ſmiling, "can you afford no grains of allowance to "the caprice of a lover?—Indeed, I never "was in a mood better adapted to perſo-"nate his infernal majeſty; I was in a de-"viliſh ill humour, it muſt be acknow-"ledged."

"And what put you into it?"

"You did—And yet I believe, I was "in the wrong. The Colonel on our way "to town this morning, explained ſome "circumſtances which greatly perplexed "me."

"In regard to Lord Elwood?"

"Yes, in regard to Lord Elwood."

"And

"And pray what can I rationally ex-
"pect from the man, who, on no better
"foundation than his own whimſical ſur-
"miſes, treats me already with petulance
"and rudeneſs?—Matrimony is in general
"no great ſweetner of the temper, and if
"thoſe ill-humours of yours ſhould re-
"turn—"

"For that you muſt ſtand your chance," interrupted he, "for though I ſhould drop "down on my knees, and moſt ſolemnly "ſwear that my temper after marriage "ſhould be one bright ſerene—one un-"clouded ſunſhine—you have too good an "underſtanding not to deſpiſe ſuch non-"ſenſe. It is a maxim with lovers, that "Jove laughs at their perjuries—but his "Godſhip ſhall never grin at my expence. "Marriage, you know, is a lottery, and "if we take each other, whether we draw "blanks or prizes, the future alone can "determine. All I know, is, I would "not willingly deceive you, nor have I a "fault, or a foible which I wiſh to conceal "from your view; and it appears to me,

"that

" that as we are both poſſeſſed of a com-
" petent ſhare of good ſenſe and good na-
" ture, we have at leaſt as great a proba-
" bility of happineſs in the marriage ſtate,
" as the generality of thoſe who enter into
" it. Neither are we of that romantic age,
" nor ſanguine frame of temper, which
" looks forwards to an union with an ob-
" ject beloved, as a ſtate of extatic delight
" and unceaſing rapture—an expectation
" which, as it pre-ſuppoſes impoſſibility,
" enſures diſappointment; and of diſap-
" pointment—diſguſt and repentance are
" the natural conſequences. I would take
" you, Julia, neither as a ſlave to be in-
" ſulted, nor a goddeſs to be adored; but
" as a tender and rational friend and equal;
" a fond and endearing companion, from
" whoſe ſweetneſs and affection, I ſhould
" derive conſolation in affliction; whoſe
" innocent vivacity would animate the
" glooms of fortune if ſhe frowned, or
" brighten her brow if ſhe ſmiled; and to
" you I would be a faithful and affection-
" ate companion, a careful and vigilant
" protector,—

" protector,—what ſhall I ſay more, Julia," continued he, catching my hand, " I would " be your friend, your lover, your huſ- " band!"—

" And I will be to you, Revell," ſaid I, turning a little towards him, " all that " your candour and generoſity merit—if I " know how!"

The reſt of our converſation I ſhall not repeat. I believe, indeed, the ſpecimen I have given was the moſt rational part of it. I dare ſay in your days of billing and cooing, your *tête-a-têtes*, with your tender turtle, were of a very different complexion.

Revell wanted to dine with me; but as I did not wiſh to become the theme of all the goſſips in Bath, I drove him out of the houſe, though with great difficulty. He tells me, Lady Archer has a cold, and that her ſweet little Delia was ill laſt night. She ſent me a moſt affectionate meſſage, and her carriage is to come to-morrow to take me to Mount Avon.

Now, how much ſoever you may exult in the accompliſhment of your predictions,

I moſt

I moſt ſincerely aſſure you, you are not one jot better pleaſed than

Your truly affectionate,

JULIA BLOOMFIELD.

LETTER XCVI.

Lady Archer to *Mrs. Wentworth.*

NOW, my deareſt Henrietta, all is over! Bloomfield is gone, and I ſhall probably never ſee him more. It is rather, I think, the circumſtances that attended our ſeparation, than the ſeparation itſelf which affect and agitate me. Had I ſeen him happy, I ſhould ſoon have forgotten him, or remembered him without regret.—But he is gone and I ſhall now be at peace?

Laſt night we were at a maſquerade, given by Lord L——. Lord Archer and I went in the characters of Orpheus and Euridice There was a time when I ſhould have been delighted to deſcribe our entertainment, but now I have neither leiſure nor

nor ſpirits. Bloomfield ſaid, he would go in the habit of an Indian Chief.

When we entered the rooms, I looked around and ſaw a perſon in the dreſs of an Indian, but he did not approach or appear to notice me; from you I conceal not the weakneſſes of my heart—I was ſecretly hurt at this indifference. My Orpheus was the admiration of every one: he played and ſung a ſonnet of which both words and muſic were his own compoſition: it was expreſſive of his tenderneſs, but inſtead of feeling myſelf gratified, by this public teſtimony of his too partial fondneſs; I was depreſt and mortified by the conſciouſneſs of meriting it ſo little. He engaged in converſation with the maſks around him, and I leaned againſt a ſeat penſive and ſad. The figure of an old reverend Monk approached me.

"Daughter," ſaid he, "you appear "melancholy and dejected; are your ſpi- "rits depreſſed by the retroſpect of ſome "ſecret crime? Confeſs your errors and "receive abſolution."

"My

"My errors," ſaid I, "are of a nature "which I flatter myſelf does not require "it."

"So fair a form," ſaid he, "muſt have "enſured you many lovers. Have you no "cruelty to anſwer for;—no falſhood or "ingratitude of which you wiſh to be ab-"ſolved?"

"I cannot wiſh to be abſolved of crimes "to which I am a ſtranger!"

"Would to heaven," cried he, in his own voice, for it was Bloomfield, "would "to heaven there was any truth in the aſ-"ſertion!"

"It is true," ſaid I, "and I challenge "the world to diſprove it!"

"Your union with Lord Archer diſ-"proves it! Oh Delia, Delia," ſeizing my hand with great emotion, "had you "been faithful, this hand would never "have been his."

To appear thus hurt, that the heart he had abandoned ſhould break its chain;—to repine that the woman he had deſerted, ſhould not ſtill cheriſh his idea in her boſom—

ſom—ſhould not ſtill eſteem herſelf bound by vows which he without compunction had violated! — My reſentment and my ſpirit took the alarm and roſe in oppoſition to a caprice ſo inconceiveable—a vanity ſo inſufferable.

"That this hand is Lord Archer's" ſaid I, "is my glory and my pride; could "I this inſtant be freed from my engage- "ments, I ſhould no otherwiſe avail my- "ſelf of my liberty, than to reſign it to "him. Baſely as I have been deſerted, "cruelly as I have been injured, I deſcend "not to recrimination or reproach, for ſo "far from regretting, I rejoice in the in- "conſtancy that reſcued me from a mar- "riage with a man ſo little worthy my ten- "derneſs, and was the means of uniting "me to another, who both poſſeſſes and "merits the warmeſt approbation of my "heart."

He ſtood for a minute as if in ſilent aſtoniſhment, then burſting into a ſudden exclamation—

"Recrimi-

" Recrimination and reproach!—they " belong to me! It is I who have been in- " jured—deſerted—betrayed—vilely and " diſhonourably betrayed! But you tri- " umph in my wretchedneſs—you glory in " your own guilt—your lips have avowed " it—they have confeſſed you faithleſs, " baſe and cruel.—My doubts are now at " an end—I ſee you in your native colours " —Yet, ſince you are ſo very candid, " tell, ere I go—was not Lady Harriot's " influence exerted—was it not her de- " teſted avarice that deprived me of your " affections, to attach them to her ſon?— " Was no artifice employed—ha!"

" None," returned I, " for your own " unworthineſs rendered artifice unneceſ- " ſary, even could the honour and inte- " grity of Lady Harriot's ſoul have ſuf- " fered her to deſcend to it."

" My own unworthineſs! — Gracious " heaven! what confidence! If to love " you with unceaſing fervor, to dwell with " fond regret on your idea—and even " though faithleſs, perjured and incon-

" ſtant,

" ſtant, ſtill to mitigate your crimes with " every extenuating circumſtance—if this " was unworthineſs—and it was unworthy, " mean, unmanly.—But you are beneath " my indignation! From this inſtant I " fly your preſence—I renounce your idea " —I will never behold you but with hor- " ror and averſion—nor think of you but " with ſcorn! —Farewel then, and for " ever."

He flew from me as he ſpoke, and left me ſtupified with amazement. Anger had till then ſupported my ſpirits, and my feelings were gratified by the tribute I had paid to the merit of my huſband; but now, convinced by the wild extravagance of his conduct, that Bloomfield did indeed labour under that fatal malady I had heard attributed to him, and was ſubject at intervals to paroxyſms of madneſs, reſentment gave way to compaſſion. Strange are the effects of this diſorder! Ah, if his deſertion of me was the conſequence of ſome of the caprices it engenders!—I muſt drive the diſtracting idea from my thoughts!—In all

my

my painful conflicts with my own feelings, the conſciouſneſs of his falſhood has ſupported my ſpirits, and animated my efforts;—to be convinced of his truth and conſtancy would pierce me to the ſoul! I ſunk trembling on a ſeat; fortunately the maſk I wore, concealed the tears which guſhed in ſtreams from my eyes.—Lord Archer ſoon perceived my diſorder, and imputed it to the heat, which was indeed exceſſive.—We retired early; when we got home, I found my little Delia, ill; I ſat up with her the remainder of the night, and with difficulty perſuaded Lord Archer to leave me. My anxiety for my child, by diverting my attention from reflections of a different nature, rendered me, I believe, leſs wretched. Towards morning ſhe grew better, and I endeavoured to reſt for a few hours. I aroſe before eleven; Lord Archer had ſent to Bath for a phyſician. I ſat in the drawing-room expecting his arrival, when my huſband entered, accompanied by Bloomfield, who looked pale, diſordered, and when he caſt his eyes towards

towards me, reſentful and indignant. I, however, felt only a warm emotion of pity on his approach.

"The Colonel," ſaid Lord Archer, "will no longer be prevailed on to ſtay "with us; he comes but to bid us adieu, "and departs in a few hours."

My heart was ſeized with a painful throbbing on the reflection, that this was probably the laſt time I ſhould ever behold a perſon who had once been ſo dear to me; a perſon whom I ſtill moſt ſincerely compaſſionated and tenderly eſteemed.

"Does Miſs Bloomfield accompany "you, Colonel?" ſaid I. Indeed I knew her intention was to ſtay—but I thought I ought to ſay ſomething.

"No, Madam."

Archer was viſibly chagrined at his intended departure.

"What time do you mean to return "from France, Colonel?" ſaid he.

"In October, I believe."

"Suppoſe then, you return to us and "accompany us to Ireland. What plea-

my painful conflicts with my own feelings, the conſciouſneſs of his falſhood has ſupported my ſpirits, and animated my efforts;—to be convinced of his truth and conſtancy would pierce me to the ſoul! I ſunk trembling on a ſeat; fortunately the maſk I wore, concealed the tears which guſhed in ſtreams from my eyes.—Lord Archer ſoon perceived my diſorder, and imputed it to the heat, which was indeed exceſſive.—We retired early; when we got home, I found my little Delia, ill; I ſat up with her the remainder of the night, and with difficulty perſuaded Lord Archer to leave me. My anxiety for my child, by diverting my attention from reflections of a different nature, rendered me, I believe, leſs wretched. Towards morning ſhe grew better, and I endeavoured to reſt for a few hours. I aroſe before eleven; Lord Archer had ſent to Bath for a phyſician. I ſat in the drawing-room expecting his arrival, when my huſband entered, accompanied by Bloomfield, who looked pale, diſordered, and when he caſt his eyes towards

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"In October, I believe."

"Suppoſe then, you return to us and "accompany us to Ireland. What plea-

" ſure would it give me to ſee you reſtored
" to your friends at Bloomfield."

" At Bloomfield! no, my Lord, there
" you will never ſee me!"

" You muſt not be thus implacable—
" ſuppoſe Sir Richard was to write."

" You miſtake me, my Lord, I ſhould
" be glad to meet Sir Richard any where,
" but at Bloomfield!"

Lord Archer looked ſurprized at theſe words, and the emotion with which they were pronounced. I ſaid I would go ſee the child, and left them. I had been above, about half an hour, when I received a meſſage from Lord Archer, to tell me, the Colonel was going. My nerves, I believe, were greatly affected by the diſtreſs and anxiety I had ſuffered the preceding night —ſurely the feelings of our minds depend in a great meaſure on our bodily conſtitutions! at leaſt I would perſuade myſelf that all my weakneſs is not mental. Indeed, I trembled ſo greatly as I went down the ſtairs, that I was obliged to ſtop to breathe when I got to the bottom of them. Bloom-

field

field that inſtant came out of the parlour; he had his hat on, and was going towards the door, impatient, I believe, to be gone before I came down; he ſtopped ſuddenly on ſeeing me, then ſeeming to recollect himſelf, bowed and was paſſing on without ſpeaking.

"Farewel, Colonel!" ſaid I, "may "your voyage be proſperous!"

He ſtopped again, and turning towards me—"And can you wiſh, Lady Archer?"—in a ſoftened tone of voice—

"Moſt ſincerely—moſt fervently, Co-"lonel, do I wiſh your happineſs."

"Oh, Lady Archer," cried he, catching my hand and preſſing it to his lips, "can you ſo ſoon forgive injurious treat-"ment, and ſhall we be ſevere to mark "the errors of your conduct!"

Revell and Archer came together out of the oppoſite parlour, where they had been getting their hats.

"Behold," ſaid Revell, "a tender ſen-"timental ſeparation! I think now your "near relation to Lady Archer might au-

" thorize you to ſalute her cheek, with-
" out any irrefragable breach of delicacy.
" Well, Bloomfield, I never knew a man
" of your ſenſe ſuch a perfect Don Quixote!
" —Now, what would become of you, if
" it was the fair ſaint whoſe picture I catch
" you idolizing, in every hole and corner,
" to whom you were to bid adieu?—I ſup-
" poſe you would proſtrate yourſelf with
" reverential awe, at her feet; would you
" preſume to ſalute the toe of her holi-
" neſs?"

Bloomfield, ſtill more agitated by this raillery, hurried from me and ruſhed out of the houſe. " The man's mad!" ſaid Revell, as he followed him, " abſolutely " frantic! See, he flies like lightening!"

Ah, Henrietta! his intellects are too ſurely diſarranged—ſtill he alludes to ſome imagined error in my conduct—yet ſtill he loves me!

Lord Archer returned immediately afterwards with the phyſician, whom he met in the avenue. He is a ſenſible grave looking man, about fifty. On examining the child,

he

he ſaid her complaint was entirely occaſioned by cutting her teeth, and was very trifling. "But, Madam," ſaid he, looking earneſtly at me, "you have much "more occaſion for my aſſiſtance, than "my little patient here. If I don't miſ-"take, you are in a ſlight fever; give me "leave to feel your hand."

Lord Archer looked terrified.—"There's "no occaſion for any alarm, my Lord," ſaid he, "Your Ladyſhip was at Lord "L——'s maſquerade laſt night, I pre-"ſume?"

I replied, that I had been there.

"So I imagined: indeed we ſhould "have few female patients, comparatively "ſpeaking, were it not for balls and maſ-"querades; they are excellent friends to "the faculty.—You have caught a cold, "which has fallen on your nerves; how-"ever, you have only to keep yourſelf "quiet."

Lord Archer attended him down ſtairs, and I overheard him entreating he would not omit coming to-morrow.

Revell, who accompanied Bloomfield to Bath, is returned. He ſaw him depart.—Julia and he have come to an eclairciſement—he is in high ſpirits; Julia will be with me to-morrow.—Whatever my own feelings may be, I ſhall at leaſt have the pleaſure of beholding the happineſs of thoſe I love. Indeed, it is the only ſatisfaction that I am at preſent capable of enjoying.

Write to me about Lady Harriot: I am very anxious to know if ſhe has yet received the expected account of her ſiſter's death. Adieu, my beloved Henrietta; do not be diſtreſſed on my account—I hope I ſhall ſoon be well and happy.

DELIA.

This billet, which I have this inſtant received from Seymor, has communicated to my heart the moſt pleaſurable ſenſation it has long experienced.

The Billet.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

" I mourned to you, and you wept—
" now I'll pipe to you, and you ſhall
" dance!

" dance! I am at this inſtant the greateſt
" paradox exiſting; the happieſt and yet
" moſt wretched of mankind; if anxiety
" and ſuſpenſe be wretchedneſs.

" Within this half hour I have received
" a letter from De La Valiere, dated laſt
" March, in which, after ſome frivolous,
" general intelligence, he informs me in
" the poſtſcript, that the Count Zerzen-
" horf had then been dead half a year,
" and that Jaqueline and her mother were
" with him in Paris. This letter he com-
" mitted to the care of a gentleman, who
" was to have embarked immediately for
" England; but by ſome accident, diverted
" from his original intention, croſſed the
" Alps, paſſed through Italy, and ſailed
" home by the Mediterranean; and here
" have I been loitering and waſting my
" time, whilſt my letter was travelling the
" devil knows where! But what diſtracts
" and torments me, is the idea which Ja-
" queline, who doubtleſs imagines, I re-
" ceived it long ſince, muſt entertain of

" my conduct.—How I could curſe and " execrate!"

" Oh, for a balloon to waft me to Paris! " never will I ſleep till I reach it. If I " am ſo happy as to ſucceed in my views, " if I can prevail on Jaqueline to give me " her hand, and return with me to Eng- " land before you forſake it, I will not " wait an invitation, to bring her to viſit " you. If not, next ſpring I ſhall take " her to you to Ireland, and if I can, her " mother and De La Valiere—ſo you may " be prepared for our reception; you have " room enough at Bloomfield, or on an " emergency, ſome of us may be billetted " on the Dean.—Tell Archer and Revell " —but I have no time to waſte on theſe " fellows—My horſes are ready.—Adieu, " my deareſt friend, may you be happy as " you deſerve.—Can I wiſh you a felicity " more permanent."

LET-

LETTER XCVII.

Miſs Bloomfield to *Mrs. Wentworth.*

MY ſtratagem produced the deſigned effect—my arch enemy is defeated, diſcomfited, routed horſe and foot; if you have a grain of friendſhip for me, you will celebrate my victory with public rejoicings, —illuminate the glebe houſe, ring the church bells, and ſet fire to your turf ſtacks.

I have been here four days. Lady Archer is better than when I came, and yet not quite ſo well as I could wiſh. Doctor Harrington, the phyſician who attends her, enquired if ſhe had ever been inclined to a conſumption; and on being informed that it was a diſorder in which ſhe had been once far advanced, and that her mother had died of it, I thought he appeared alarmed. He adviſed her to drink the Briſtol waters; ſhe has them brought to her every morning, though he wiſhes her rather to drink them at the ſpring. However, ſhe laughs

at our anxieties, and tells us, ſhe will be perfectly well when ſhe gets to Bloomfield. Lord Archer, I believe, will finiſh his buſineſs as ſoon as poſſible.—I dare ſay they will be with you in the middle of October. It would give me exceſſive delight to be able to return with them to Ireland, as you, my friend, ſo affectionately requeſt me to do; but I cannot leave my brother; indeed I believe there is no pure and unmixed delight in this world—at leaſt there is none for your Julia.—And if at intervals I yield without reſtraint to the pleaſure of a tender and mutual attachment, the idea of my brother returns with new force to my mind, and my heart reſents as a breach of our friendſhip, that I ſhould feel any happineſs, whilſt he is wretched. Revell ſometimes ſoothes and ſometimes chides me; at ſometimes tells me he is jealous of my affection to my brother, and at others that it endears me to him the more. All his jealouſies are at an end, and he tells me, that now he is ſure of my heart, I may flirt as much as I pleaſe; but this indulgence

ſtrikes

ſtrikes directly at the very root of coquetry; for which of us would take the trouble of playing off our airs, if our lovers, inſtead of being mortified, were only diverted by them? Beſides at preſent, I have no ſubject to practiſe on, except I could make a conqueſt of Doctor Harrington; and Revell is ſo vain a wretch, that I fear it would be impoſſible to make him jealous of a ſober ſettled phyſician, of fifty.

Your little god-child is getting a fine ſet of teeth—ſhe is very well and as merry as ever. Revell and I toſs her from one to the other, like a little ſquirrel. 'Tis fit I ſhould inſtruct him betimes in the art of nurſing, and indeed he is very fond of the office. I like to ſee men fond of children; it ſhews a good diſpoſition and an affectionate heart. How go on Aunt Sophy and the Dean—our antediluvian lovers, are they ſtill demurring?—Give my compliments to them, and tell them I can't poſſibly be ſo impolite as to ſtep into the matrimonial circle, until they have led the way.

At the rate we go on we ſhall all be ſoon completely paired, except my brother—Ah my poor brother!—Adieu! I am growing ſorrowful.

Your's, ever,

JULIA BLOOMFIELD.

Lady Archer is greatly diſtreſſed by a letter ſhe has juſt now received from Lady Harriot, informing her, that her ſiſter, Lady Wharton, expired on the road between Paris and Calais, about a fortnight ſince.

LETTER XCVIII.

Colonel Bloomfield to *Lady Harriot Bloomfield.*

Perronne, September 27, 1783.

OF ſome crimes human laws take cognizance—againſt others of a nature more atrocious, we appeal to a higher tribunal—even to that of the Almighty,—and conſcience, his vicegerent in the human

man breaſt, is the deputed miniſter of his vengeance!

Such crimes are yours.—Yes, unhappy woman, your ſecret iniquities are revealed —your ſerpent wiles are diſcovered—and the poſt which brings this to your hands, conveys to thoſe of Lady Archer, the letters you addreſſed to your ſiſter—the fatal evidences of your guilt and of my undoing! But I will not reproach you with your crimes. Were I ſo mean as to deſcend to invectives, the black vocabulary of human curſes, contains not an execration adequate to your treachery, or to my reſentment!—

From that reſentment you have nothing more to dread. Reverence for my Delia, and reſpect for her huſband, whom I eſteem as much, as I abhor his mother, will prevent me from expoſing a perſon ſo nearly allied to them, to the public contempt and infamy ſhe merits!

HORATIO BLOOMFIELD.

LET-

LETTER XCIX.

Colonel Bloomfield to *Lady Archer*.

(Encloſing Lady Harriot's Letters, page 59, 1ſt Vol. 256, 2d Vol. and 117-168, 3d Vol.)

Perronne, Sept. 27, 1783.

DESPISED—deteſted—abandoned to contempt and horror—loaded with calumny and blackened with aſperſions—accuſed of the baſeſt ingratitude, the vileſt apoſtacy—dare I appeal to a judge ſo ſtrongly biaſſed—ſo inveterately prejudiced!

The encloſed ſcrolls, deteſtable as they are, vindicate my innocence, and avow my integrity.—Gracious heaven, were the author of them a man, the hope of vengeance!—but I rave—would the horrors of bloodſhed mitigate the anguiſh of my ſoul!

Oh Delia, the friend of my youth!—the beloved of my ſoul—on whoſe fidelity my heart repoſed with ſuch a fond reliance, how could I diſtruſt thy honour—how could I doubt thy affection!—Ah, I am juſtly

juſtly puniſhed for my ſhameful credulity and my blind impetuoſity! Reduced to the verge of the tomb, by me—by me, whoſe guardian tenderneſs ſhould have ſhielded thy tender youth from every inclement blight! Oh Delia, gentle and compaſſionate as thou art, canſt thou forgive the wretch that has undone thy peace?

Yet hear me, ere we be ſeparated for ever. I conjure you by the union of our ſouls—that union, which once conſtituted our mutual felicity—ere it be utterly and eternally diſſolved; I conjure you to ſee me once more. Let me again behold my long loſt Delia, ſuch as before the fatal deluſion which betrayed us both—gentle, tender, faithful—ſoothe my tortured breaſt with mercy and forgiveneſs, and let me claſp you to my heart, ere we part to meet no more. Refuſe not to grant this little tribute to the memory of our plighted vows—our former paſſion!—no, bury the idea in eternal forgetfulneſs—heavenly powers! art thou not the wife of another!

Pity

Pity me—forgive me! 'tis the only conſolation you or heaven can beſtow on the wretched.

HORATIO BLOOMFIELD.

LETTER C.

From the Same.

MADAM,

Perronne, Sept. 28, 1783.

NOTHING but the violent perturbation of mind, occaſioned by the ſudden diſcovery of wrongs ſo accumulated and unmerited, can extenuate the preſumption of the letter, I lately addreſſed to you. Not an inſtant's tranquility have I enjoyed ſince I wrote it, diſtracted by the apprehenſion, that whilſt I implored your pity, I have incurred your indignation. I am conſcious too, that the intelligence it contained, had it even been unfolded in the gentleſt terms, muſt have affected your peace.

peace. Horror, at the diſcovered guilt of a perſon ſo long eſteemed and relied on—ſo nearly related, and ſo tenderly beloved! Perhaps, too, an emotion of pity, excited by the unmerited ſufferings of a man once honoured with your friendſhip, might have clouded for an inſtant the ſerenity of your ſoul. But the contemplation of the preſent bleſſings which ſurround you, will ſoon baniſh from your mind thoſe painful retroſpections. May every revolving year augment the number of thoſe bleſſings, and may the beſt and lovelieſt of the human race ſtill continue to be the happieſt.

I retract the raſh—the blind requeſt my letter of yeſterday diſcloſed. No, Lady Archer, I muſt never ſee you more;—never, at leaſt, 'till ſucceeding years have chilled the fervor of my ſoul and extinguiſhed each warm ſenſation of my heart. Then we may meet, when we can meet in peace, and with the calm philoſophy of age, revert to paſt diſquietudes, as to ſome feveriſh dream; view with equal contempt the toys that allured, and the trifles that agitated

agitated us, and wonder at the devaſtations of the paſſions, when we are no longer ſubjected to their influence. But hope conſoles me with a proſpect of a nearer and more permanent oblivion.

If, Madam, the ſingular incident, which put the letters I encloſed you, into my hands, reſtores me to your forfeited eſteem, I ſhall regard it as the moſt fortunate that could have chequered an exiſtence devoted to miſery: but however it may affect your ſentiments, mine muſt continue invariably impreſſed with reverence of your elevated virtue, and the moſt tender ſolicitude for your happineſs.

HORRTIO BLOOMFIELD.

LETTER CI.

Colonel Bloomfield to *Julia*.

Perronne, Sept, 29, 1783.

ONE inſtant I take my pen, and the next, conſcious of the inability of language

language to expreſs the complicated ſenſations which divide and diſtract my ſoul; I fling it from me in diſpair.

Heavens! by what ſtrange and unforeſeen events, are the iniquities of the wicked revealed. In vain ſhall treachery involve herſelf in the intricacies of diſſimulation—at the moment when ſhe views with triumphant exultation the ſucceſs of her ſubterfuges; when ſhe ſits as a queen and ſays in her heart, "I ſhall ſee no ſorrow," the veil is lifted by a hand inviſible—the dark receſſes of her guilty labyrinths are expoſed to ignominy—to contempt—to horror!

By a concurrence of fortuitous incidents, which, had they occurred to any other than me, would have been in no reſpect remarkable; in my way from Calais, I ſtopped at Perronne. I went to the Agneau d'or, the inn you may recollect, where I met you laſt ſeaſon on your return from Paris. The hoſt recollected me—he conducted me into the ſame apartment, which had been the ſcene of that tender and delightful interview,

view, which ſucceeded to our long and melancholy ſeparation. I remained there that night, but next morning as I was preparing to purſue my journey, the hoſt brought me a ſmall caſket, which he informed me had been forgotten by the domeſtics of an Engliſh gentleman, whoſe lady died at his houſe, about a fortnight ſince, on her return from Montpelier. He added, that no Engliſh perſon had arrived at his houſe ſince that period, to whom he choſe to entruſt it; and that as he had not the ſmalleſt knowledge of the language, he was entirely ignorant of the contents, which he begged I would examine; that, if of conſequence, they might be reſtored to the owner. I told him, I ſhould view it at my leiſure; he left it with me, and after I was dreſſed, when I was ready to ſet out—recollecting my promiſe, I took the caſket. It was inſcribed in a female hand—"Letters from "my ſiſter." I took the firſt ſheet which occurred—the words which met my eye were theſe.

"Bloomfield

"Bloomfield is ſtill dear to Delia, but "in an attachment ſoo deeply rooted—an "affection which has withſtood near four "years of abſence, and his imagined falſ-"hood, what alteration would a few weeks, "or even months produce?"

Amazed and thunderſtruck, I ſcarce could credit the evidence of my ſenſes, 'till glancing my eye on the ſignature, I beheld the name of the traitreſs that has undone me. Panting and breathleſs, I ſcarce had power to unravel the dark myſtery, which, by degrees unfolded to my view. When late we parted, Julia, I thought my miſery admitted not of aggravation—baniſhed the ſociety of thoſe I loved, driven into exile by an unhappy paſſion, and ſcorned by the object that inſpired it!—but now—yet can wretchedneſs be combined with rapture? Can deſpair be complicated with ecſtacy? Theſe letters, according to the different lights in which I conſider them, exaſperate me to a fury of revenge, or diſſolve me in tears of tenderneſs. As the teſtimonies of Lady Harriot's

riot's guilt and my misfortunes, I view them with horror and averſion, or animated to frenzy by a ſudden tranſport of rage, I fling them on the earth, I trample them under my feet, I imprecate aloud the vengeance of heaven on the head of their author—I ſnatch them from the earth and flying to the fire, determine to deſtroy them! Some ſecret power with-holds my hands—are they not the evidences of my injured Delia's conſtancy and love—the monuments of her truth and of her ſufferings? Softened by this idea, I preſs them to my lips, I bathe them in my tears and fold them to my heart; that heart in which their author has fixed the ſtings of agony—again I ſpurn them from me with ſuch horror as I ſhould fling an empoiſoned reptile from my boſom.—Sometimes a ſtrange ſuſpenſion of my faculties ſucceeds to this war of diſcordant paſſions—a feeling, which to thoſe who have not experienced it muſt be inexplicable—my ſoul wanders like a ſtranger thro' her terreſtrial habitation; I queſtion even my own exiſtence—I aſk myſelf what I am?

I gaze

I gaze on the objects around me, without annexing a distinct idea to any of them;—a thousand different images rush confusedly before my imagination, but I no longer possess the liberty of selecting or the power of combining them. I start from this waking dream, to feel more sensibly the energy of my distress, and the poignancy of my anguish. Again I fly to the letters—Heavens! when happiness was within my reach, what cursed infatuation with-held me from discovering myself to Delia, before her union with my rival, placed her beyond my hopes for ever!—Lord Archer, generously impartial, would have yielded her to my prior claim—my superior tenderness—but oh, his mother—is there not an over-ruling Providence? Why then is vice thus suffered to extend its webs—thus to entangle innocence in misery?—My Delia—my beloved—my suffering angel!

Julia, she loved me at the moment she pronounced her vows to Lord Archer—when a self-devoted sacrifice to generosity and friendship, she trembled at the altar!

even

even afterwards, though ſo cruelly reproached—though ſo blindly abandoned—ſhe loved me; and, like a pitying angel, extenuated his crime, whoſe blind credulity deſtroyed her health and peace.

"If Bloomfield had retained his reaſon, "he could never have added inhumanity "to inconſtancy, and meanly endeavour to "exculpate himſelf by diſhonourably im-"puting his own errors to me!"—Mad! Yes, pernicious wretch, your arts have realized the tale you framed, now I am mad indeed!

Our late converſation at the maſquerade no longer appears myſterious—it was to my inconſtancy, ſhe alluded, when involved in a fatal deluſion, I fancied ſhe confeſſed her own. Her worth, no longer clouded by imagined errors, appears to my view in all its native purity—its unſullied brightneſs.—Ah, when I recollect our parting interview—when I recall to my mind the ſweet benignity, the angelic meekneſs with which ſhe poured out wiſhes for the happineſs of the deluded wretch, who, a few hours before,

before, had reproached, inſulted, villified her!—

In the bitterneſs of my ſoul, I have written to Lady Harriot—I have informed her of the diſcovery of her crimes—and remitted my vengeance to ſtings of conſcience and the ſhame of detected guilt.

I alſo wrote to Lady Archer, in the firſt tranſports of my paſſion—a letter, I fear, improper to be addreſſed to the wife of my friend.—In the determination of returning to England, to throw myſelf at her feet, I beſought her to ſee me once more. I claimed one parting interview, as a tribute due to our former tenderneſs—our mutual contract which had been broken by treachery, not diſſolved by conſent. But, Julia, that honour, which in a late converſation you averred to be the favourite idol of my ſoul, amidſt this perturbation of my paſſions, aſſerted her privilege to be heard; ſhe whiſpered, that Delia was the wife of my friend, and I determined never to ſee her more.

O honour! O virtue! pure emanations from the ſource of celeſtial light—to ye I ſacrifice each partial feeling of my ſoul. Obedient to your mandates, I fly the woman I love—I renounce the faſcinating idea of reviving a tenderneſs, perhaps yet unextinguiſhed in the boſom I adore. Julia, I go—I care not whither, as chance directs me, or as caprice prompts;—perhaps to wander over Alpine ſnows. Ha! if ſome hoſpitable cell ſhould afford an aſylum to my troubled ſpirit;—if in ſome ſavage cavern I ſhould find that peace which I have in vain purſued in varying climates, and in different worlds.—What is ſociety to me?—a deſert;—the world? a grave, where all my hopes lie buried.—Oh, to forget its crimes—its ſorrows—its viciſſitudes—to remember nothing but that you are faithful, and that Delia loves me!

HORATIO BLOOMFIELD.

LET-

LETTER CII.

From Julia to *Mrs. Wentworth*
(encloſing the three preceding Letters.)

HENRIETTA, my dear Henrietta, we are undone. Merciful heaven! how vain are the efforts of human prudence! Our ſchemes to ſecure the peace of my brother and your friend, are not only abortive, but by ſome ſtrange fatality our misfortune has been precipitated by thoſe very meaſures we concerted to prevent it.—When you have read the letters I encloſe, you cannot be ſurprized at the effects they have produced.

Yeſterday, Delia requeſted me to go to Bath, to beſpeak her mourning for Lady Wharton. Lord Archer was gone to Briſtol, to tranſact ſome buſineſs with his agent; I left Mount Avon about twelve, and returned in leſs than two hours. As I alighted from the carriage, I was met by Jenny, who informed me, with a countenance full

of anxiety and diſtreſs, that on going into her lady's apartment about half an hour after my departure, ſhe had found her extended on the floor in a ſwoon: that with the aſſiſtance of the other ſervants, ſhe had removed her into her bed chamber, but that as ſoon as recovered from one fit, ſhe had relapſed inſtantly into another. She added, that ſhe had diſpatched a ſervant to Bath for me and Doctor Harrington, and another to Briſtol, to apprize Lord Archer of her lady's ſituation. Extremely ſurprized and terrified at this intelligence, I enquired if any thing had occurred to alarm or agitate her. She anſwered, that ſhe knew of nothing, except ſome letters ſhe had received immediately after I had left her, but that ſhe knew from the poſt-marks, they were not from Ireland.

I flew to her and found her ſtretched on the bed quite inſenſible, and but that I perceived ſhe breathed, I ſhould have thought her dead. I was a little after relieved by the arrival of Doctor Harrington; he was extremely ſhocked at the ſituation

in

in which he found her, and enquired if it had not been occaſioned by ſome extraordinary accident. After we had been near an hour uſing every poſſible means for her recovery, ſhe began to revive. She raiſed her eyes to me as I hung over her, her boſom heaved, ſhe groaned deeply. "Oh "Julia, Julia," ſaid ſhe, "my peace is "loſt for ever!—I have been betrayed— "enſnared—undone!" She reclined her head on my boſom as ſhe ſpoke, and a violent flood of tears ſeemed to relieve the oppreſſion of her breaſt. She did not perceive Doctor Harrington, who had retired to a little diſtance; ſtill ſhe wept and ſighed, as if her heart would burſt her boſom; then ſuddenly ſtarting, "where are they—thoſe "fatal evidences of the guilt of her I "truſted, and the truth of him I loved! "Oh Julia, hide them, hide them!"—She fell into an agony, as if her ſoul was pierced anew by ſome dreadful recollection, and again fainted.

"Poor ſufferer," ſaid Doctor Harrington, approaching the bed, "ſome deep

" and heavy affliction preys upon her breaſt,
" and until it be removed, my efforts will
" be fruitleſs."

She recovered a little after, and perceiving Doctor Harrington, " I fear, Doctor,
" I have given you a great deal of trou-
" ble. Have I been long ill? Where is
" Lord Archer?" ſhe ſighed deeply as ſhe pronounced his name. " Don't you re-
" collect he went to Briſtol?"

" O true, he did ſo; but I am ſtrangely
" confuſed." Then in a low voice to me,
" Julia, did I receive any letters to-day?"

" Not whilſt I was at home."

" Go into my dreſſing-room.—Oh, if it
" ſhould have been but a dream!"

I went as ſhe directed and found the floor ſtrewed with papers. I eagerly ſnatched them up; the enigma was explained in an inſtant. When I could aſſume ſufficient compoſure, I returned to her. She looked earneſtly at me, as if to read in my countenance, the confirmation of her fears, it was ſufficiently expreſſive; ſhe cloſed her eyes, and her head ſunk on the pillow:

Doctor

Doctor Harrington beckoned me into an adjoining apartment.

"Doctor," ſaid I, "do you think her "in danger?"

"I hope not, Madam; but it is impoſ- "ſible to decide with any certainty. Thoſe "diſorders which originate from the mind, "are leaſt within the power of phyſic, and "that Lady Archer's is ſuch, is but too "evident."

"She has indeed," replied I, "been "baſely betrayed and cruelly injured; by "one of the perſons too, ſhe moſt revered "and loved. This is all I am at liberty "to reveal; and I have too great reliance "on your prudence to dread your com- "municating the obſervations your expe- "rience and judgment may enable you to "make to any third perſon—not even "to Lord Archer, as I am well aſſured, "her tenderneſs for him will induce her "to conceal from his knowledge, ſome "circumſtances, which, perhaps, might "wound his peace yet more deeply than "her own."

" It is a pity," ſaid he, " that the tran-
" quillity of ſo amiable a pair ſhould be in-
" terrupted by any misfortunes; but let
" us remember, that calms ſucceed to
" ſtorms, and look forwards with hope.
" Mean-time, you may be aſſured of my
" ſecrecy and attention."

He wrote a recipe, which he ſent to Bath, and kindly conſented to continue with us the remainder of the day. Indeed, poor Revell was as much afflicted at the illneſs of our friend as myſelf, though ignorant of the misfortune by which it was occaſioned.

I returned to Delia; ſhe appeared quite exhauſted; ſhe preſſed my hand when I approached her, but did not ſpeak. I ſat by her bedſide until the return of our meſſenger; ſhe raiſed her head to ſwallow the medicines we brought her; but again cloſing her eyes, appeared unconſcious of every thing that paſſed around her. In the evening the ſervant, who had been ſent in ſearch of Lord Archer, returned with an account, that he was not to be found. It was growing

ing late and this intelligence occaſioned us great perplexity; Revell was preparing to go in ſearch of him, when he unexpectedly entered with an air of great diſorder and agitation.

"Doctor," ſaid he, abruptly addreſſing Doctor Harrington, "let me know the "worſt—Muſt I loſe my Delia?"

"My Lord, theſe apprehenſions are "childiſh. It is true, Lady Archer is ill, "and her diſorder, if neglected, might be "dangerous; but ſhe is now calm and "quiet, neither is her fever very high."

"May I not ſee her, Doctor?"

"Not until you can ſee her with com-"poſure; very much depends on her being "kept quiet."

"Then, I fear I muſt never ſee her—"and yet I muſt."

"Well, preſently you ſhall, my Lord; "but you muſt permit me to accompany "you, that I may keep you in order."

"Come then, Doctor," ſaid he, after a ſhort ſilence, "I am now compoſed."

I aroſe to accompany them; as he approached the bed, I perceived that he trembled violently and ſtopped as if irreſolute. Doctor Harrington advanced and gently opening the curtains, enquired how ſhe was.

"Much better, Doctor,—but what "hour is it?—It is now dark, I think, "and Lord Archer is not returned."

"He is returned, and would have been "with you ſooner, if I had permitted him."

Archer advanced; ſhe held out her hand to him; he caught it with emotion, and dropping on his knees, preſſed it to his lips, whilſt his boſom heaved and the tears guſhed in ſtreams from his eyes.

"Oh Archer," ſaid ſhe, recovering her ſpirit, and raiſing her head from the pillow whilſt ſhe flung her other arm over him, "why this perturbation? Have you not "ſeen me recover from a more dangerous "illneſs than this? Are we ſent into this "world to enjoy health uninterrupted, and "tranquillity unclouded? Let us rather "conſole ourſelves with the bleſſings hea-

"ven

" ven has ſo profuſely poured around us, " than aggravate by impatience, thoſe tri- " vial ſufferings with which it is pleaſed to " afflict us."

He leaned his head beſide her on the pil- low, but uttered not a ſentence.

" Julia," ſaid ſhe, " where is my child? " I think I have never before been ſo long " without ſeeing her."

The child was brought: Archer ſtarted up and flew out of the room without ſpeak- ing. " Go, doctor," ſaid ſhe, " go and " conſole him; go and aſſure him my in- " diſpoſition is not dangerous."

Indeed, I cannot forbear being ſurprized at the violence of his ſorrow—one would imagine that he had ſome ſecret perception —ſome intuitive knowledge, of the mis- fortune, which, were it known to him, muſt ſo dreadfully afflict him.

" Julia," ſaid ſhe, when the Doctor left us, " go write to my Henrietta: encloſe " to her the letters you found in my dreſ- " ſing-room, for I muſt never ſee them " more; but do not alarm her with exag-

" gerated accounts of my ſufferings. Aſ-
" ſure her that ſevere and afflictive as this
" ſtroke has been, I will not weakly ſink
" beneath it; but will ſuſtain it as becomes
" a daughter, a wife, a mother and a friend.
" Deſire her to conceal Lady Harriot's
" treachery, and to aſſure her of my for-
" giveneſs; for I think I can forgive her.
" Oh Julia, had I been thus ſtricken by
" an enemy—I could have borne it;—but
" to be wounded by a hand ſo loved, ſo
" cheriſhed!—Oh, it was too cruel—and
" yet I hope I can forgive it—but I muſt
" not—cannot ſee her!—Write alſo to your
" brother—ſoothe him with aſſurances of
" my tendereſt friendſhip—my warmeſt
" ſympathy, my moſt fervent eſteem; every
" affectionate and endearing ſentiment,
" which my engagements with Lord Ar-
" cher does not render criminal; but
" above all, confirm him in the generous
" reſolution never to ſee me more.—Now,"
continued ſhe, again tenderly embracing
the child, " I think my breaſt is lightened
" —here—take her with you.—Oh my
" little

" little cherub, may you be more happy " than your mother!"

She ſunk ſoon after into a ſlumber, the conſequence of a compoſing draught Doctor Harrington had ordered her; but often raved and ſtarted, and at intervals her groans and ſighs evinced the deep diſquietude of her mind.

In compliance with Lord Archer's entreaties, Doctor Harrington remains here to-night. About one o'clock, I retired to my apartment, to read thoſe unfortunate letters once more. I found on my table, *that* from my brother to myſelf, which in the confuſion, occaſioned by Lady Archer's illneſs, the ſervants had forgotten to give me. Heavens! what deep-laid ſchemes of villainy were here diſcloſed. The artful, deteſtable hypocrite; what would I not give to be able to upbraid her with the ruin, in which ſhe has involved us. Go to her, my dear Henrietta, be not influenced by Delia's injunctions—go, and in the preſence of Wentworth and the Dean—to them, at leaſt, you may expoſe her—go load her with

with invectives and revilings; let her behold in your hands the proofs of her discovered guilt—her treachery—her ingratitude. Repreſent to her view the innocent, amiable, unhappy victim of her artifices, after twice narrowly eſcaping the fate to which her perfidy and diſſimulation had ſo nearly reduced her, again trembling on the verge of a final diſolution; for can a mind ſo ſuſceptible bear up againſt ſuch repeated ſhocks, or a conſtitution ſo delicate, ſuſtain them? Then direct her views to my brother.—Good heaven, where is he at this moment? Perhaps a diſtracted wanderer in a foreign kingdom; Oh Henrietta, does not his letter to me bear the viſible traces of a diſtempered mind? When I reflect on his wrongs and on his ſufferings, I have little more compoſure than himſelf.—Dear are the ties which unite me to Lady Archer; but thoſe which draw me to my brother, are ſtill more ſacred—ſtill more dear!—I cannot endure the uncertainty in which his letters involve me—to-morrow I will ſet off in purſuit of him. Revell ſhall

not

not accompany me; never ſhall his attachment to me ſteel his breaſt againſt the impulſes of ſympathy and compaſſion—he ſhall ſtay to conſole his friend.

I hear Lady Archer's door open.

It was Lord Archer; he is ſtill in violent agitation; Revell has been with him all night. Adieu my dear friend.—Alas! unconſcious of the misfortune which ſoon muſt wound your heart, you ſleep ſecurely at this moment, you enjoy the ſweet repoſe of innocence, peace and virtue; why am I deſtined to deſtroy your tranquillity?

JULIA BLOOMFIELD.

LETTER CIII.

Mrs. Wentworth to *Julia*.

JULIA, I come; ſhall you generouſly purſue the ſteps of a brother, and ſhall I not

I not fly to a friend more dear, than all the world beſides? Yes, though frozen ſeas were to be croſſed—though unpeopled deſerts were to be trodden, my tenderneſs and gratitude would conquer every obſtacle.

Wentworth would accompany me, but that the Dean is at preſent ſo ill, that he cannot leave him.—But ere this, perhaps, you have left Somerſetſhire; yet if by any accident, you ſhould be ſtill detained there, tell my Delia, that I ſhall never know an inſtant's tranquillity, until I fold her to my heart.

H. WENTWORTH.

LETTER CIV.

Mrs. Wentworth to *Mr. Wentworth.*

Mount Avon.

I AM here, my dear Wentworth, after a thouſand dangers and diſtreſſes; but I have

have forgotten them all. I have been abundantly recompenſed for my ſufferings, by finding my friend much better than I hoped. Our meeting was ſilent, ſorrowful and tender.

Julia is ſtill here: Revell perſuaded her to remain here with our friends, and ſuffer him to go in purſuit of Bloomfield.

If I was rejoiced at finding Delia better, than after a diſcovery ſo ſevere and afflicting, I thought it poſſible ſhe could be; I was no leſs ſhocked and diſtreſſed at the altered appearance of Lord Archer. His eyes are ſunk, his countenance is pale and dejected; he has neither ſpirits nor appetite; and Julia ſays, ſhe is convinced, he never ſleeps, as ſhe hears him all night, when he does not hang over Delia's bedſide, traverſing his apartments. Delia is greatly alarmed at this alteration; ſhe ſays, and indeed I believe it, that ſome latent diſorder lurks in his blood. Doctor Harrington ſeems to be of the ſame opinion; but Lord Archer refuſes to give the leaſt attention to our remonſtrances, and declares he

he was never better.—But if it is his mind alone that ſuffers—it appears unaccountable, that his ſpirits do not riſe in proportion to Delia's amendment; on the contrary, he every hour becomes more melancholy and dejected. I have alluded to the dangers and diſtreſſes I have encountered ſince our ſeparation; but indeed my greateſt anxiety aroſe from my conſciouſneſs of the alarms you ſhould ſuffer on my account; though the moſt terrifying of my adventures, were thoſe of which you could entertain no apprehenſion.

We had ſcarcely got out of the Bay, when the ſky was overcaſt with a terrifying gloom—the wind, which, when we parted, was ſo great as to alarm your fears, aroſe to a frightful violence, and the waves ran ſo high, that I thought, without a miracle, our little bark could not withſtand the rage of the tempeſtuous billows. Need I aſſure my deareſt huſband, that at that tremendous moment, when I almoſt conſidered myſelf as loſt to the world, that he and our little one, were uppermoſt in my thoughts.

thoughts. It is true, my regrets were divided, the idea of my Delia returned with new force to my mind; fatal as the event of my voyage threatened to be, I could not repent that I had embarked in it; and I derived an inconceiveable conſolation from the reflection, that if the dreaded deſtruction overwhelmed me, I ſhould fall a martyr in the ſacred cauſe of friendſhip. Occupied by theſe reflections, I ſat ſerene and tranquil, whilſt the terrified wretches around me, were ſunk in the ſtupidity of horror, or animated by the wildneſs of deſpair. Still the ſtorm continued with unremitting violence; nor did it in the leaſt abate, till after ſun-riſe in the morning. The returning day animated us with new hopes; but the weather was ſo hazy, that at ſeven o'clock it was ſcarcely twilight. The ſailors then found that we had been driven conſiderably out of our courſe, and had paſſed Holy-head. The wind, which was yet extremely high, ſtill drove us to the South. We ſeveral times diſcerned the coaſt of Caernarvonſhire, and the Iſle of Angleſey,

Angleſey; but the roughneſs of the ſea rendered it impoſſible to approach the land, even in a boat. Towards evening, however, it became tolerably calm, we approached the ſhore and caſt anchor; but the idea of remaining another night on board, was ſo dreadful to my two attendants, poor Patrick and Winny, that I prevailed with the Captain to put us on ſhore in a boat. Though the face of the country, where we landed, was deſolate and barren, and the ſailors informed us we had five miles to walk, before we could arrive at any town; no poor wretches, reſcued from the walls of a dungeon, were ever more rejoiced than were we at our eſcape from our floating priſon. Winny, however, had been ſo dreadfully ſea-ſick, and was ſtill ſo very unable to walk, that Patrick and I were obliged to ſupport her between us, the greateſt part of the way; for our common calamity had levelled all diſtinctions. We met not a creature, except a few of the peaſants, who ſpoke no Engliſh; and without a guide to direct us, we found

found ourſelves in the midſt of an unknown country, with the ſhades of night gathering thick around us. Indeed, I was greatly apprehenſive that we had erred from the directions given us by the ſailors, and had wandered out of our courſe; for inſtead of five miles, it appeared to me that we had walked ten. We were ſoon relieved from our anxieties, by perceiving the town we were in queſt of at the bottom of the hill; we were directed to it by the lights in the windows; for it was now dark. We went to a ſort of inn, and I was agreeably ſurprized to find a coach at the door, which induced me to hope I might be able to procure ſeats for my fellow-travellers and myſelf. But in this I was diſappointed; for on enquiry I found there was but one vacant ſeat, and there were two of us to be accommodated; of Patrick, I knew I could eaſily diſpoſe as an outſide paſſenger. The carriage was going to Bangor—where our hoſt informed me, I might probably find it eaſy to hire a vehicle to purſue my journey, which, if I remained in my preſent quarters,

quarters, I foreſaw, would be impoſſible. This conſideration determined me to ſet out immediately. I reſolved to put Winny into the coach, and hire horſes for myſelf and Patrick; but here a new obſtacle aroſe —there was but one to be procured. After much deliberation, I determined to mount it myſelf and accompany the coach. In vain poor Patrick oppoſed my reſolution, and Winny with tears beſought me to take the ſeat in the coach, and ſuffer her to ride behind Patrick on the horſe; the landlord interpoſed and informed us, that it was a wayward beaſt which could never be prevailed on to carry double. This intelligence at once ſettled our difference, and Winny, who knew not how to ride ſingle, was at length, though not without great difficulty, prevailed on to take her ſtation in the coach. I mounted my Roſinante, Patrick aſcended the box, and in this order, about eight in the evening, we began our march. The night was tolerably calm and at intervals, when the moon broke through the clouds that obſcured her, I perceived

that

that we travelled through a country wild and romantic; but when we had proceeded about three miles, a hollow wind blew from the ſea, and the ſky ſuddenly darkened around us. Patrick diſmounted from the box and would have perſuaded me to permit him to walk beſide me; but as my horſe followed the carriage very cloſe, I thought it unneceſſary, and obliged him to reſume his ſeat. He was ſcarcely replaced when I ſaw ſeveral flaſhes of lightening, and heard the rumbling of diſtant thunder. Juſt then my horſe ſtumbled, and I ſuppoſe, threw me over his head, for I retain no recollection of the accident, and only remember that when I recovered my ſenſes, I found myſelf proſtrate on the earth, alone, in total darkneſs, and drenched in torrents of rain. As I was endeavouring to riſe from the ground, a fiery meteor glanced beſide me, and a violent peal of thunder burſt above my head. The darkneſs, which again ſurrounded me, was ſo deep and ſo horrible, that it forcibly occurred to my imagination, that the lightening had ſtruck

me

me blind. This dreadful idea, however, was ſoon diſpelled by repeated flaſhes, by the light of which I diſcovered my horſe, who had not forſaken me in my diſtreſs, ſtanding cloſe at my ſide. Rejoiced to find any living creature near me, I aroſe from the earth, and holding him faſt by the mane, leaned my face againſt his neck. I conjectured, as was in reality the caſe, that my fellow travellers had gone on without miſſing me; and when my terrors had a little ſubſided, I determined to mount my horſe once more, and commit myſelf to his direction, thinking it by no means improbable that it was a road to which he was accuſtomed: and well aſſured that Patrick, as ſoon as he ſhould miſs me, would return in ſearch of me. Once more then, I mounted him, and fervently committing myſelf to that Being, with whom "darkneſs is as the noon-day," I proceeded on my way. It ſtill continued to rain hard, and I diſcovered that I had loſt my hat in the fall. Does not Providence, my dear Wentworth, when it ſends us trials,

ſend fortitude to ſuſtain them? Terrifying as was my ſituation, I felt little uneaſineſs. The idea of my Delia, that dear, ineſtimable injured friend, to whoſe aid I flew, occupied every ſenſation of a heart too keenly ſuſceptible of her diſtreſſes, to be ſenſible to its own. Still I proceeded amidſt the rage of the conflicting elements, and by the lurid glare of the lightenings, I perceived a ſcene ſavage, wild and deſolate. Methought, that at intervals, I heard a noiſe reſembling the roaring of the ſea, and I found that I aſcended a path very narrow and ſo ſteep and rocky, that my horſe ſtumbled at every ſtep. As it was a road which it was impoſſible for any carriage to paſs, I no longer doubted that I had loſt my way. My horſe made a full ſtop, and whilſt I was encouraging him to proceed, the fires which poured in torrents from the opening clouds, afforded a dreadful illumination, which diſcovered to me all the horrors of my ſituation. I found myſelf on the verge of a tremendous precipice, which projected over the ocean, and heard

the wild ſurges beating furiouſly againſt its baſe. Shuddering with terror, I knew not what courſe to purſue; one falſe ſtep might precipitate me into the frightful abyſs, which yawning beneath me, threatened inſtant deſtruction; I reſolved to diſmount, and await in that frightful ſituation the return of day; but when I attempted to move, my limbs were ſo ſtiffened with the cold and wet, that it was with the utmoſt difficulty I could execute my deſign. I contrived, however, to ſlide off the horſe, and felt myſelf again on the ground; but utterly unable to ſtand, I ſunk againſt a rock, and crawling round it on my hands and knees, explored a little cavity which ſheltered me from the rain. The horſe followed me; he ſtood leaning over me; I on my part felt the moſt endearing ſentiments for my companion in misfortune; I held the bridle and leaned my face againſt his. In this ſituation, my fortitude entirely abandoned me; I felt the powers of life almoſt ſuſpended, and bereft of the ſlighteſt expectation of relief, thought of nothing but

periſh-

periſhing in thoſe unfrequented wilds. Oh, Wentworth, what agonizing ſenſations diſtracted my boſom in that dreadful interval! I recalled to my memory the reluctance with which you ſuffered me to depart—and I drew from the mutual ſadneſs and dejection by which our laſt interview was clouded, melancholy preſages of our eternal diſunion!—My child!—my huſband! every endearing tie—every tender connection ruſhed on my diſordered imagination, and wrung my breaſt with intolerable anguiſh. I was rouſed from theſe reveries by the barking of a dog, which flew with great violence at my horſe; and immediately afterwards heard a man calling him off. My heart palpitated with tumultuous pleaſure at the ſound of a human voice; but was as ſuddenly depreſſed by terror and anxiety. My fears repreſented, that the perſon who approached, might be ſome midnight robber or aſſaſſin, and I determined if poſſible to remain concealed in my receſs. The dog mean-time refuſed to obey the call of his maſter, who, led by curioſity to diſcover

the object which excited his anger, approached my retreat. He perceived the horſe; but impreſſed with terror, I let the bridle fall, and ſhrunk into my hole.

"A horſe bridled and ſaddled!" exclaimed the ſtranger. "Good God! perhaps the rider has been precipitated from the height of this fearful promontory, and lies at this inſtant mangled amongſt the rocks!—Do I hear a groan! —or is it but the murmuring of the ſurges? Unhappy wretch! had I arrived a little ſooner I might have reſcued thee from deſtruction!"

Theſe words and the tone of exquiſite ſenſibility in which they were pronounced, inſtantly diſſipated my fears. I ſupported myſelf on my arm, and addreſſing the ſtranger, though in a voice ſcarcely intelligible, entreated his aſſiſtance.

"A female!" he exclaimed in great ſurprize, raiſing me at the ſame time in his arms, "What has reduced you to this deplorable ſituation? Poor wanderer! this tender and delicate frame was not

formed

" formed to ſuſtain the inclemencies of this " pityleſs ſtorm!"

I replied, that I had been ſeparated from my companions and loſt my way in thoſe unpeopled mountains.

" Bleſt be the accident," ſaid he, " that " conducted me to your relief! I ſhall ſoon " bring you to a place of ſafety; but you " are unable to walk; for once let punc- " tilio ſubmit to neceſſity, and permit me " to carry you."

I ſaid I would moſt willingly truſt myſelf to his protection, and with the aſſiſtance of his arm had ſtill ſtrength enough to walk.

The thunder by this time had ceaſed, the ſky began to clear, and the moon diffuſed faint glimmerings through the opening clouds. My guide conducted me to a door, which opened amongſt the rocks at a little diſtance from the place of my concealment, and entering it, we deſcended by a winding path, interrupted by rocks and ſhaded with trees. At the bottom was a deep river, which we croſſed by a little ruſtic bridge and found ourſelves in a garden.

He led me through a ſerpentine walk to an arched door which opened into a neat hall flagged with white marble.

"You need not be afraid," ſaid he, as we entered, "of truſting yourſelf with a "hermit in his cell. Beneath this little "roof you may reſt as ſecurely, as with "the friends from whom you have been "ſeparated."

As he ſpoke, he conducted me into a parlour on the oppoſite ſide of the hall, which, though furniſhed with ſimplicity, was ornamented with taſte. But what gave me moſt pleaſure, was a blazing fire; there were lights burning on a table; but I ſaw not a human being except my conductor. Indeed the whole adventure had ſo greatly the air of enchantment, that I was almoſt tempted to dread I had fallen into a ſlumber in my receſs, and that the ſcene around me was a pleaſing illuſion of the imagination. The ſtranger placed me in an elbow chair, near the fire; and opening a garde du vin, inſiſted on my ſwallowing a glaſs of an excellent cordial, which he aſſured me was the

the moſt effectual preſervative againſt cold. He aſſiſted me in taking off my riding coat, and perceiving that my habit was alſo very wet, left me for a moment, and returned with a large chintz wrapper, which he entreated me to make uſe of.

"I am ſorry," continued he, with an obliging ſmile, "that I cannot offer you "the aſſiſtance of a female attendant; but "the only one I am maſter of, has obtained "permiſſion this evening to viſit a daugh-"ter, who reſides in a neighbouring village, "and I ſuppoſe the ſtorm has prevented "her return. However, I will with-draw "whilſt you take off your habit."

He left me, and I willingly accommodated myſelf with the comfortable garment, with which he ſupplied me; and ſtrange as my ſituation was, ſo greatly was I prepoſſeſſed by the appearance and manners of my hoſt, that it gave me not the ſlighteſt uneaſineſs. He returned immediately afterwards with ſome cold ham and chicken, and ſpread a little table with great dexterity. Indeed, I required not his friendly

ſolicitations to eat heartily; for not having taſted any thing ſince my departure from Dublin, I was almoſt exhauſted with fatigue and weakneſs. Whilſt I eat, he attended me with great aſſiduity, and mixed my wine and water, which he warmed for me at the fire.

During my repaſt, I had leiſure to examine his features and perſon more minutely. He was tall, and notwithſtanding the plainneſs of his dreſs, had that air of elegance and dignity, which diſtinguiſhes the perſon in whom the advantages of birth and education are united, with ſtrength of underſtanding and ſublimity of ſoul. His countenance exactly correſponded with this idea; the ſacred ſtamp of nature had impreſſed it with honour, candour and benevolence; but it ſeemed to exhibit at the ſame time a ſtriking proof of the injuſtice with which her favourites are often treated by fortune; for the ſmiles of animation which one inſtant brightened his features, in the next were baniſhed by the returning gloom of thoughtfulneſs and the ſadneſs of dejection.

dejection. His apparent ſecluſion from ſociety—the ſolitude in which he reſided, every thing, in fine, that related to him, impreſſed me with an idea of ſuffering virtue flying from unmerited calamity, to the ſhades of retirement, and eſteem was rendered more intereſting by ſympathy.

As I ſat at table, I related the adventures of the night. He expreſſed great compaſſion for my diſaſters, and pleaſure at the accident which conducted him to my relief. He ſaid, a friend who had ſpent ſome days with him, had gone that morning to viſit a gentleman who reſided eight miles diſtant; that in the evening he had ſent his chaiſe and ſervants for him, and expecting his return had waited up for him. That finding him ſtay ſo late, he became uneaſy, and to divert his chagrin had gone to walk; an amuſement, he added, in which he frequently indulged himſelf in the middle of the night, when he could not ſleep. I confeſs, there appeared to me ſomething very whimſical in the amuſement of walking in ſuch a dreadful night. He ſighed very

deeply as he ſpoke, and ſunk into a reverie in which he continued ſome moments: then ſuddenly awaking from it, he aſked me with an air of vivacity, if I meant to take the road to London? "For, ſituated as I "am," continued he, with a ſmile, "I "dare not hope I ſhall long enjoy the ſo-"ciety of my amiable gueſt."

I replied, that though in other circumſtances I ſhould think myſelf extremely happy in his ſociety, at preſent I was flying to a friend who was ill at Bath, and that I conſidered as an age, every moment which retarded my journey.

"At Bath!" he repeated with great emotion. The words ſeemed to revive ſome latent diſquietude; his boſom heaved, he ſunk back in his chair, and his eyes were fixed on a picture which hung behind my back; whilſt he gazed on it with a countenance expreſſive of mingled tenderneſs and anguiſh, his lips moved. Theſe ſudden guſts of paſſion, together with an air of wildneſs and diſtraction which glared in his eyes, inſtantly convinced me that his intel-

lects

lects were disordered; but though this discovery struck me with excessive horror, I entertained not the least apprehension for my own safety; he inspired me with an esteem so tender and compassionate, that I found it impossible to fear him. His lips still moved and his eyes continued fixed on the picture. I turned to view it; judge my amazement, when I beheld the portrait of my Delia! "My Delia!" exclaimed I, gazing in inexpressible surprize, "by what "miracle is she here?"

"Your Delia!" cried the stranger, starting from his seat; "she is mine, by every "dear, by every sacred tie she is mine!— "O thou resemblance of my beloved!" continued he, wildly apostrophizing the picture; "thou only remaining consolation of "my existence! the only blessing fate has "left to fill the dreary vacuum of my "breast! O shade, dear—far dearer to "my eyes than the light of heaven—shall "these eyes no more behold thy celestial "original, or behold her but in the arms "of a rival?"

" Heavenly powers!" exclaimed I, in unutterable aſtoniſhment, " are you then " that Bloomfield?"

" Yes," interrupted he, " I am that " undone, that wretched Bloomfield!— " But what art thou?—art thou really a " human being, or, as thy aſpect beſpeaks " thee, a ſeraphic viſion ſent by heaven to " ſpeak peace to this agitated boſom?"

" Ah!" ſaid I, melting into tears, " do " you then retain no recollection of the " Henrietta Willmore, who was ſo often " at Bloomfield, your playfellow and com- " panion?"

" Henrietta!" exclaimed he in amaze- ment, " the lovely little Henrietta!—the " beautiful favourite of my Delia! Oh " Henrietta!" continued he, whilſt ſinking on his knees, he tenderly took my hands and preſſed them to his lips—" what happy " hours were thoſe?—Yet why do I revert " to them with this fond enthuſiaſm!— " ſhould I not rather execrate them as the " blackeſt of my exiſtence—was it not in " them I embibed this delicious poiſon

" which

" which preys upon the ſource of life! O " Delia! dear faithful Delia! can I then " regret that my ſoul does homage to thy " virtues?—No—wretched as my ill-fated " tenderneſs has rendered me, not for the " univerſe would I relinquiſh thy idea!"

As Bloomfield thus wildly poured forth the effuſions of his paſſion, he held my hands ſtill claſped in his. Never did I feel a ſtronger ſentiment of tenderneſs and pity! thus reſtored by an event ſo unexpected, to a perſon who had been dear to me in childhood; a perſon whoſe misfortunes had taught me to compaſſionate, and whoſe worth had obliged me to revere. Endeared by the ſentiments of a congenial affection —our boſoms animated with tenderneſs for the ſame amiable object — a tenderneſs which rendered us at that inſtant almoſt equally unhappy! there was ſomething in this interview ſo unſpeakably affecting,— a ſimilarity of feelings ſo intereſting and ſo moving, that I could with difficulty refrain from claſping Bloomfield to my boſom

ſom and weeping aloud: my tears, indeed, did flow abundantly as I leaned over him.

Whilſt in this attitude, the door ſuddenly opened and a ſtranger abruptly entered; but to conceive his aſtoniſhment, you muſt recollect not only my very particular ſituation with reſpect to Bloomfield, but the ſtrange appearance I muſt have exhibited in the looſe chintz wrapper, and my hair, which had been perfectly wetted by the rain, flowing about my ſhoulders. I was inſtantly conſcious of the impropriety of my ſituation, and, covered with confuſion, whilſt the ſtranger, who was a ſmart young man in a military dreſs, muttered ſomething like an apology, and was going to withdraw.

"Come Wyndham," ſaid Bloomfield, riſing to prevent him, "come and help "me to entertain my amiable gueſt."

The ſtranger on this encouragement, advanced a few ſteps towards me; then ſuddenly falling back, and throwing himſelf into an attitude of amazement, exclaimed with a very theatrical tone and geſture,

"Hail

" Hail foreign wonder!
" Whom, certain, theſe rough ſhades did never breed;
" Unleſs ſome goddeſs that in rural ſhrine
" Dwell'ſt here with Pan or Sylvan!"

Then turning to Bloomfield, " I ſup-
" poſe it is unneceſſary to enquire, if this
" fair divinity is the original of your fa-
" vourite picture?—I commend your ſpi-
" rit and reſolution, Madam," again ad-
dreſſing me, " in thus generouſly reward-
" ing the paſſion of the moſt enamoured
" knight, who ever imbibed the vital air
" ſince the days of Don Quixote: the lady
" muſt poſſeſs very little ſenſibility or gra-
" titude, who would not ſeek a aſylum
" from the tyranny of a huſband, in the
" arms of a lover ſo faithful and ſo paſ-
" ſionate!"

Imagine, if poſſible, my diſtreſs and confuſion at this addreſs.

" Can you really entertain thoſe licen-
" tious ſuſpicions," cried Bloomfield, " or
" are they only uttered with a deſign of
" inſulting this lady, whom a concurrence
" of unfortunate accidents has driven to
" this houſe for protection?"

" Sir,"

" Sir," ſaid I, endeavouring to recover from my confuſion, " I am not the perſon " you take me for—I am not —"

" What you are *not*," interrupted the ſtranger, gazing at me as he ſpoke with a confident air, " I know not; but that you " *are*, I know, the moſt beautiful and en- " chanting creature I ever beheld! Nor " can I be ſurprized that my friend has " transferred his adorations to a new ſhrine; " the old ſaint, if her picture does her any " juſtice, was a mere dowdy in compariſon " to you!"

" I transfer my adorations!" exclaimed Bloomfield, wildly interrupting him, " ne- " ver, beloved angelic ſhade! never ſhall " this boſom devoted to thee, be polluted " by another affection!"

" Sir," ſaid I, reſuming my dignity and addreſſing the ſtranger, " I wonder not at " the unfavourable ideas which the ſtrange " ſituation in which you ſurprized me, has " induced you to conceive. However ap- " pearances often lead us into error, and " I muſt aſſure you, that if they have in-

" ſpired

" ſpired you with any ſuſpicions injurious
" to my honour, they have greatly de-
" ceived you."

" Injurious to your honour, Madam!—
" Oh no—by no means—I have no doubt
" that you are a lady of the moſt unqueſ-
" tionable propriety of conduct;—I dare
" ſay, your connection with my friend is
" entirely in the Platonic ſtyle. How-
" ever, I know he is a damned happy fel-
" low! I might have lived to get a beard
" as long and as grey as thoſe of the goats
" which inhabit theſe mountains, before
" ſuch angel would come to explore me."

This reply overwhelmed me with new confuſion. Bloomfield, who engroſſed by his own reflections, had not heard a ſyllable of this latter converſation, now turned towards me.

" Henrietta," ſaid he, " it is now, I
" think, nine years ſince we laſt ſaw each
" other. Good heavens, what a variety
" of calamities has diverſified that interval!
" —but to you it has been fortunate: Julia
" has informed me of your fate. Doubly

" happy

" happy in your friendſhip and in your " love, you generouſly ſacrificed ambition " to tenderneſs, and renouncing the al- " lurements of ſplendor, found the way " to felicity —But where is that huſband? " that protector?"

" If that huſband—that protector," replied I, " is not the companion of my " journey, he is detained by indeſpenſable " neceſſity, not by a want of inclination. " The Dean, his uncle, is ill, and we could " not both forſake him."

Captain Wyndham, for it was he, the perſon with whom Julia viſited Ireland laſt ſummer, liſtened attentively to our words. Indeed, I thought he looked as if he ſuſpected us of carrying on a farce to deceive him.

" You muſt allow me to ſay, Madam," ſaid he, " that the gentleman your huſ- " band, by no means merits the title of a " protector, with which you honour him. " Were I poſſeſſed of a treaſure ſo inva- " luable, I would ſuffer all my old un- " cles and grandſires, even to the third

" and

" and fourth generation, to go to the de-
" vil, rather than expoſe it to the ſlighteſt
" danger. The only excuſe I can poſſibly
" find for his conduct, is a ſuppoſition,
" that this expedition of yours was made
" without his privity."

" The ſuppoſition," ſaid Bloomfield, angrily, " is both abſurd and impertinent.
" Since you cannot learn to treat this lady
" with the reſpect which is due to her, you
" would do well to retire from her pre-
" ſence."

" I believe, indeed," ſaid Wyndham, riſing, " that I am rather an incumbrance
" at preſent, and to oblige you will take
" myſelf away."

He was prevented from leaving the room by the entrance of a ſervant, who came to inform Colonel Bloomfield, that as he attended the carriage, in which Captain Wyndham returned, he had found a ſtranger wandering about the mountains in ſearch of a lady, who had been loſt during the ſtorm; he added, that he had perſuaded the man to accompany him home, and aſked

his

his maſter's permiſſion to lodge him for the night.

Immediately concluding that this wanderer could be no other than my Patrick, I begged he might be introduced. I never ſaw a poor creature ſo rejoiced as he was to ſee me.

"Perhaps, Sir," ſaid I, turning to Captain Wyndham, "the evidence of this "perſon may baniſh from your mind thoſe "ſuſpicions, which my proteſtations had "not power to expel; and convince you, "that the interview which you ſo charitably attributed to deſign, was entirely "the work of accident; and the emotion "in which you ſurprized me, the pure "and innocent effuſion of eſteem and affection, on the unexpected recognition "of a friend long known and valued."

"Dear Madam," replied he, in ſome confuſion, "there is not the ſlighteſt neceſſity for any eclairciſſment; as I hope "for mercy, I never was ſtruck with "more exalted ſentiments of any lady. "I was certainly ſomewhat amazed—but

"if

" if I have uttered any thing to offend, I " entreat ten thouſand pardons."

" After ſo many fatigues and diſtreſſes," ſaid Bloomfield, I am convinced you muſt " be quite exhauſted. Permit me to con- " duct you to your apartment, and endea- " vour to retrieve your ſtrength with a little " repoſe. To-morrow, if you are deter- " mined to leave us, my carriage and ſer- " vants ſhall attend you on your journey."

He took a light as he ſpoke, and led me to a very neat and elegant bedchamber, which he informed me, was his ſiſter Julia's; and affectionately bidding me good-night at the door, left me to my reflections. When I had time for recollection, I knew I muſt be at Clanguinna, the favourite retreat of Bloomfield, which Julia had quitted laſt ſummer to come to Ireland.

I threw myſelf into bed; and overcome by fatigue, ſunk into a ſlumber; but my reſtleſs imagination ſtill exhibited the ſcenes of the preceding hours, and I awoke in the morning but little refreſhed. I aroſe, and hearing the family below ſtairs, went down.

down. I found Bloomfield in the parlour. After ſome obliging enquiries relative to my health, "Henrietta," ſaid he, "I "think you ſaid laſt night, you were fly- "ing to a friend who is ill at Bath;—tell "me, I entreat, is there any room for my "apprehenſions — is that friend, Lady "Archer?"

I heſitated at this queſtion;—"I ſee," reſumed he, "your unwillingneſs to give "me pain—but I am anſwered by your "ſilence!"

"It is true," replied I, "Lady Ar- "cher is not perfectly well at preſent, and "my viſit is to her."

"Oh Henrietta! you are her deareſt "friend and confidante; you know each "ſecret movement of her ſoul: keep me "not in ſuſpence, I conjure you—am I ſtill "doomed to perſecute and torment her,— "am I the unhappy occaſion of her ill- "neſs? — did the letters I addreſſed to "her?"—

"By no means," interrupted I, "her "illneſs was previous to the receipt of your "letters,

"letters, and the phyſician who attended "her, aſcribed it to a cold ſhe had caught "at a maſquerade: but it is trifling, and "I hope to find her health almoſt eſta-"bliſhed."

"Oh, that maſquerade! Heavens, what "demon inſtigated me ſo baſely to inſult "—ſo vilely to reproach the moſt fault-"leſs and excellent of human creatures!"

"It was your misfortune, not your "fault," ſaid I; "you muſt endeavour "to forget it.—But by what accident do "I find you in this place, when all your "friends imagine you ſtill on the Con-"tinent?"

"I ſcarcely know myſelf.—I am under "the dominion of an unquiet perturbed "ſpirit, that will not ſuffer me to reſt con-"tented any where.—But undoubtedly "your penetration has already revealed to "you my new calamity—a calamity of "which I ſtill retain enough of reaſon to "be conſcious!"

I perceived that he alluded to the diſ-order of his intellects. He continued ſome minutes

minutes thoughtful and melancholy, then again breaking ſilence—" After the fatal " diſcovery which convinced me at once " of my errors and my wrongs—in the " violence of my rage I wrote to Lady " Harriot—and in the firſt effuſions of my " tenderneſs and ſorrow, to my deceived " and injured Delia. I determined to re- " turn to her to take a final adieu, but ho- " nour and a ſenſe of propriety oppoſed " and ſilenced the rebellious movements " of my heart. Baniſhed her preſence, the " world appeared a barren wilderneſs; in " vain I looked around—no ray of hope " illumined my dreary proſpects. Involv- " ved in the darkneſs of deſpondency and " the gloom of deſolation—the ſenſe of my " misfortunes rankled deeply in my bo- " ſom;—but ſtopped not there—it reached " the ſeat of reaſon!—In the enthuſiaſm " of diſtraction, I reſolved to renounce a " world, which had been to me ſo unpro- " pitious; and actually left Perronne, with " a fixed determination of exploring in the " Alps or Pyrenees, ſome deſart hermitage,

" in

" in which I might waſte the remainder of
" my exiſtence. For a day and night I
" purſued my journey towards the ſouth,
" ſcarcely ſtopping to take refreſhment or
" repoſe; when the full-length picture of
" my Delia, which I had left in my houſe
" in London, recurred to my memory, and
" recollecting the ſame moment the letters
" which before our fatal diſunion, I had re-
" ceived from her, I inſtantly altered my
" intention, and determined to tranſport a
" treaſure ſo ineſtimable to my ſoul, to the
" hermitage to which my delirious fancy
" pointed my wiſhes. Once more I turned
" my face to my native country, and ar-
" rived in London in a few days. My
" faithful ſervant Johnſon perceived my
" indiſpoſition with terror, and ſent for
" our family phyſician, who viſited me,
" as if by accident; but I ſaw through the
" artifice. He directed me to bathe in the
" ſea; and ſenſible, by this time, of the
" neceſſity of paying ſome attention to my
" health, I reſolved to retire to this fa-
" vourite retreat, where I hoped to enjoy

" a tranquillity as uninterrupted, as if en-
" vironed by Alpine foreſts or Pyrenean
" mountains. As I knew the knowledge
" of my ſituation would diſtract my poor
" Julia, with new anxieties on my account,
" I did not write to her; and left London
" with no other company but that portrait
" (pointing to Delia's picture,) and the
" letters. Oh, Henrietta, in thoſe artleſs
" unſtudied performances how ſweetly is
" wiſdom animated by vivacity! — how
" amiably is tenderneſs blended with de-
" licacy! dear pledges!" he continued, taking them from his boſom and preſſing them with a wild fervor to his lips, " Sa-
" cred monuments of the tenderneſs of her
" I love!—Henrietta, how long do you
" think the paper on which they are
" written can laſt?—I think I muſt tran-
" ſcribe them—and, but at intervals, in-
" dulge myſelf with a view of the origi-
" nals—but it will be unneceſſary—I can
" already, I believe, repeat them from
" memory."

After

After this whimſical digreſſion, he ſunk into thought. I interrupted his reflections by enquiring where he had met Captain Wyndham.

"At Coventry. Officiouſly good-na-
"tured, he inſiſted on accompanying me
"hither. We have been here five days,
"and I have already received great benefit
"from the ſea, in which I conſtantly
"bathe. But when you leave me, I can
"no longer remain here; I dare not truſt
"myſelf with my own apprehenſions; you
"muſt permit me to accompany you to
"Bath."

"To Bath!" ſaid I, viſibly alarmed at this propoſal.

"Miſtake me not," ſaid he, "it is not
"my intention, or even my deſire to ſee
"Lady Archer; but convinced as I am,
"that if I have not occaſioned her illneſs,
"I have at leaſt contributed to it; and
"conſcious of the weakneſs of my own in-
"tellects.—Oh, if youcould form any con-
"ception of thoſe ideal horrors, you would
"not be ſurprized that I dare not to abide

" them? Beſides, at Bath I ſhould not
" only receive the moſt early and authentic
" accounts of Lady Archer's health, but
" ſhould ſee my ſiſter, and reſide at the
" houſe of a friend, whoſe compaſſion and
" tenderneſs would greatly alleviate my
" diſtreſſes; there too I ſhould have the
" additional advantage of the beſt advice,
" which, as my diſorder is yet in its earlieſt
" ſtage, may poſſibly be effectual."

I had nothing to object to this reaſoning, which, however, greatly embaraſſed me. Averſe as I was to Bloomfield's returning to Somerſetſhire, I felt no leſs repugnance to the idea of leaving him in his preſent unhappy ſtate of mind, deſerted by his friends, and abandoned to the melancholy phantaſms and gloomy caprices of a diſordered imagination. I had, however, no choice; his determination was fixed, and my remonſtrances, had I even ventured to diſſuade him from it, would have availed but little. All I could do, was to reſolve to keep him ignorant of the danger of my friend.

This

This point adjuſted, it was reſolved that Bloomfield and I ſhould ſet off immediately in his chaiſe, and that I ſhould ſend Patrick for Winny, with directions to proceed together to Holy-head, and with my baggage, which was ſtill on board the packet, follow me from thence in a hired vehicle. Bloomfield left me to give orders to his ſervants, and Captain Wyndham joined me. He made many apologies for his behaviour the preceding evening, which, he acknowledged, had been extremely *outrie*, and entreated me to let him have the honour of attending me to Bath.

"I have ſpent here," continued he, "five of the moſt diſmal days that ever "poor devil experienced! I have been ab- "ſolutely bored to death, and expiring on "the rack of ennui;—curſe me if I would "not rather be ſtuck on a picket!—Not "a glimpſe of the fair ſex was I bleſſed "with, until yeſterday—for I cannot af- "ford that diſtinction to an old Welch "hag, 'as black as Erebus'—the only "female attendant my friend has here.—

" She is as ugly as the devil—and all ſhe
" utters may be incantations to him for
" aught I know. Poor Bloomfield! do
" you not obſerve that he is a little touched?
" That is, a little *derangé* hereabouts—
" (putting his fore-finger to his forehead)
" you conceive me. — I judged what it
" would come to—he was always a ſtrange
" fellow—very much in the heroic ſtyle—
" quite on ſtilts.—In America, he never
" uſed to ſleep peacely in his bed, and the
" more dreadful the night, the more plea-
" ſure he found in wandering through
" charnel vaults and ſepulchres, like a
" diſcontented ghoſt. I uſed to threaten to
" get him laid in the red ſea—ha, ha, ha!
" Certainly a very ugly affair did happen
" to him about a year before our regiment
" was ordered home. We had an engage-
" ment with the enemy, which laſted un-
" til it was almoſt dark, and Bloomfield,
" who fought like a devil, killed with his
" own hand, a young man who had been
" his favourite friend in England, and fel-
" low ſtudent in Scotland; but by ſome

" unex-

" unexpected turn in his affairs, had en-
" gaged in the ſervice of the rebel army.
" I remember it perfectly—I was at a little
" diſtance, when Bloomfield called to me
" to advance.—Beaufort, the young man
" who lay wounded on the earth, recol-
" lected his voice, and faintly called him
" by his name. Bloomfield leaped from
" his horſe and raiſed him in his arms; we
" conveyed him to our quarters and had a
" conſultation of ſurgeons—but all in vain.
" —It was undoubtedly a moſt afflicting
" ſcene.—I never cried ſo much ſince the
" death of my grandmother (who left her
" fortune to my ſiſter, and cut me off with
" ten pounds) no tragedy you ever ſaw
" was equal to it—Venice Preſerved and
" the Mourning Bride, were nothing to
" it! It was ſo moving to ſee the poor
" fellow, and a very pretty lad too—whilſt
" his vital blood flowed faſt from his
" wounds, leaning on Bloomfield's breaſt
" and kiſſing the hand that had ſtabbed
" him! I was obliged to decamp—I could
" not ſtand it. Bloomfield was almoſt diſ-

" tracted — You know it was really ex-
" tremely diſagreeable to ſee a perſon one
" tenderly loved, expiring before ones eyes
" in ſuch ſhocking torments; eſpecially
" as poor Bloomfield conſidered himſelf as
" the murderer of his friend—though it
" was purely accidental. He never re-
" covered it; he had him interred in a
" cave, and as regularly as the night came,
" he uſed to go weep and lament over his
" grave; which you know was all mere
" nonſenſe—for what good could that do?
" Then another thing that contributed to
" unſettle his mind, I fancy, was a ſtrong
" attachment to ſome heroine or other,
" who jilted him and married another, as I
" have heard it hinted. Since I came here
" laſt, I have obſerved him to pay very
" particular attention to the picture that
" hangs there. I remember ſeeing it in
" his houſe in town, and Miſs Bloomfield
" told me it was a family piece. I ſhould
" not be much ſurprized to learn that it had
" been drawn for his great-grandmother,
" and that his whimſical fancy had meta-

" morphoſed

" morphoſed it into a Dulcinea. To fall " in love with a great-grandmother! ha, " ha, ha, upon my life that would be " *bizarre!* Yet he moſtly appears perfectly " rational, and you would not deſire to " hear a man talk more ſenſibly on general " ſubjects; but if you happen to touch his " tender point, he grows wild as the winds " ſometimes, and runs on with ſuch rhap- " ſodies, about flying to wilderneſſes and " living with beaſts of prey in deſert ca- " verns, and ſome wicked Lady Harriot, " that has deſtroyed and ruined him—juſt " like Don Quixote and the enchanters.— " However, he is become much more com- " poſed within theſe two days.—If a ſta- " tute of lunacy is taken out, I ſuppoſe his " ſiſter will get the eſtate!—She'll be a " damned fine fortune, faith!—but ſhe'll " become quite inſufferable — ſhe's bad " enough already, *entre-nous*—intolerably " conceited, and a develiſh coquette."

This converſation, or rather harangue, was interrupted by a ſervant, who came to call us to breakfaſt. We found Bloom-

field preparing for our departure with great alacrity, and the Captain was no leſs rejoiced to quit a ſolitude ſo little adapted to his taſte. The latter politely equipped me with a white beaver of his own, in the place of that which I had loſt. He accompanied us on horſeback, and Bloomfield was my companion in the chaiſe. On our journey, though we diſcourſed of paſt occurrences of the moſt affecting nature, in general he was tolerably compoſed. On the ſecond evening we arrived at Bath; I left him and the Captain at the houſe of his friend Mr. Morley, and proceeded alone to Mount Avon. I have already ſpoken of the ſituation of affairs there. Julia, before my arrival had been apprized by Johnſon, her brother's favourite ſervant, of his return to England and preſent circumſtances, and, impatient to join him in Wales, had diſpatched an expreſs in purſuit of Lord Revell. She was extremely ſurprized to hear of his excurſion: and though it was late in the evening when I arrived, went to Bath to ſee him, though without Delia's know-

ledge

ledge, who believes him ſtill on the Continent; and as ſhe has never ſeen his laſt letter to Julia, has no ſuſpicion of his illneſs. She is viſibly altered for the better ſince I came here, and now leaves her apartment; they tell me, my preſence has greatly conduced to her amendment: can I then regret any dangers or difficulties I have ſuffered. Yet Doctor Harrington ſtill ſeems apprehenſive of a conſumption; but I have often ſeen her much worſe than at preſent. Indeed, after having once already beheld her riſe as if it were from the jaws of the grave, when even the moſt ſanguine of her friends deſpaired of her recovery, I ſhall not be eaſily prevailed on to relinquiſh a hope which prevents me from being miſerable If nothing prevents us from executing our deſign, as ſoon as ſhe is able to bear the journey, we will return to you; but I am ſtill extremely anxious on Lord Archer's account, and more than ever apprehenſive for his health, which ſeems hourly to decline.

Bloomfield has been much better ſince his return to Bath. As his diſorder has been ſo ſlight, I think we may with reaſon expect his entire recovery.

Tell me if you have ſeen Lady Harriot, and how that unfortunate woman bears the diſcovery of her guilt?

I have a thouſand queſtions to aſk you relative to the Dean and our little one; but Julia will not ſuffer me to write more.

I have juſt now been informed by Doctor Harrington, that that unfortunate wretch, Lady Mordaunt, has been ſeized with a violent paralytic diſorder, which, though not likely to put a ſudden period to her exiſtence, will, in all probability, render the remainder of it miſerable.

H. WENTWORTH.

LET-

LETTER CV.

Rev. Mr. Wentworth to *Mrs. Wentworth.*

OH, my Henrietta, with what ſenſations have I read your letter! A thouſand times in the courſe of that dreadful, tempeſtuous night, when all my hopes of happineſs were embarked on the tumultuous ocean, a thouſand times did I reſolve never again to be ſeparated from you, and deprecatad thoſe romantic ideas of gratitude and duty which induced me to ſuffer you to depart without me.—My diſtreſs and anxiety were inconceivable, until I heard of the ſafe arrival of the packet at Holy-head.

Oh, my lovely wanderer, what dangers have you encountered! Methinks I ſee you ranging alone through unfrequented wilds —at midnight—bare headed and expoſed to all the inclemencies of that tremendous night. I have ſeen my Henrietta, aghaſt and terrified at a thunder ſtorm, fly to my arms for protection—what power then inſpired

ſpired my amiable heroine with fortitude, to deſpiſe the horrors of that dreadful ſcene! —Was it not the conſciouſneſs of ſuperior worth, and the fervor of holy friendſhip?

I have ſeen Lady Harriot; ſhe came to Bloomfield the day before I received your letter, or the joyful intelligence it communicated of our Delia's amendment. The Dean and I were at Bloomfield the day after her arrival there. From the moment we entered, I ſaw her endeavouring to diſcover in our countenances, if we were acquainted with her guilt; the deep melancholy of which her own was expreſſive, diſarmed my reſentment, and I accoſted her with a mildneſs which might have deceived her into an opinion of my ignorance; but the Dean's manners were more expreſſive of his ſentiments; he ſcarcely ſaluted her as he entered, and turned from her with a ſternneſs and contempt too evident to admit of miſconſtruction. Sir Richard and Lady Bloomfield ſtill ſuſtained their misfortune with that venerable ſolemnity of ſilent ſorrow, ſo much more affecting than the

the grief which evaporates in tears and complainings. Sir Richard and my uncle went into the garden, the ladies retired and I remained alone in the parlour. Lady Harriot immediately returned to me; ſhe appeared extremely diſtreſſed and embarraſſed, yet deſirous of ſpeaking on a ſubject, which I, on my part, as earneſtly wiſhed to avoid. We both continued ſilent; but determining to evade an eclairciſſment ſo diſagreeable as that which I perceived ſhe meditated, I took my hat and ſaid I would join the old gentlemen in the garden.

"Stay, Mr. Wentworth," ſaid ſhe; "ſtay, I entreat you. There is a ſubject," continued ſhe, heſitating in great diſtreſs, "—on which—for I cannot ſuppoſe you "ignorant of the unfortunate—"

"It is true, Madam," replied I, not much leſs embarraſſed than herſelf; "it "is true, I am acquainted with the cir- "cumſtances you allude to; but as it is "impoſſible to recall paſt t.anſactions, I "think it in vain to refer to them."

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"Oh,

" Oh, Mr. Wentworth, it is indeed im-
" poſſible to recall the paſt? But tell me,
" for I dare not apply to herſelf for infor-
" mation; tell me, does Delia hate me?
" does ſhe brand my crime with infamy?
" —has ſhe expoſed it?"

" To none," ſaid I, " from whom ſhe
" could conceal it: and her attention to
" Lord Archer's peace, is a motive ſuf-
" ficiently prevalent to induce her to hide
" from his knowledge a tranſaction, which
" muſt irreparably deſtroy it."

" Generous creature!" cried ſhe, in great emotion, yet evidently overjoyed, " Oh Mr. Wentworth, I have been cruelly " miſled!"

The Dean entered alone, and ſeated himſelf with an auſtere and ſullen air, without uttering a word. Lady Harriot ſat ſtill drowned in tears. " I perceive, Sir," ſaid ſhe, raiſing her eyes to him, after a pauſe of ſome minutes, " that you too are informed " of the unhappy accident which—"

" You are miſtaken, Madam," ſaid he, ſternly interrupting her; " I am informed

" of

" of no accident. An accident, according " to my conception of the ſignification of " the word, implies an event ſimply the " effect of chance; but thoſe misfortunes " and calamities which are the offſpring of " flagitious deſign and premeditated vil- " lainy, cannot juſtly be characteriſed by " that denomination. Neither, if you make " alluſion to the extraordinay incident that " revealed to Colonel Bloomfield's know- " ledge, the vile rapacity which firſt inſti- " gated you to contrive his deſtruction, " and the baſe diſſimulation and diabolical " treachery which enabled you to effect it " —neither can I term it unhappy, as each " detection of atrocious guilt, ought to " be regarded as a manifeſtation of the " Divine Juſtice."

" Heavens!" ſaid Lady Harriot, bathed in tears and ſcarcely able to articulate a ſentence, " is my guilt then ſo black! " is my crime ſo unpardonable!"

" Not abſolutely unpardonable, I hope; " in a Chriſtian ſenſe not unpardonable; " though many a murderer has gone laden

" with

" with chains and ignominy to a torturous
" execution with a conſcience more void
" of offence."

" A murderer!—O heaven!"

" Will the poiſon work leſs ſurely be-
" cauſe it is ſlow?—O, thou inſidious
" wretch—" ſtarting from his ſeat in great diſorder, " canſt thou reflect on the ruin
" in which thou haſt involved a family,
" which raiſed thee from obſcurity to ele-
" vation, from indigence to abundance,
" and bear to ſee the light! Reflect on
" the wrongs of Bloomfield—that unhappy
" youth! driven by thy nefarious ſubter-
" fuges, a diſtracted fugitive from his
" friends and native clime.—Hadſt thou
" only robbed him of a fortune, of which,
" but for thy accurſed artifices, he had
" been the indubitable inheritor, thy
" crime might have admitted of ſome ex-
" tenuation. Againſt the ſin of murder,
" the voice of reaſon cries aloud, and hu-
" manity revolts.—Almoſt all ages and
" nations have concurred in ſtigmatizing
" it with infamy, and puniſhing it with
" death—

" death—yet is it not more merciful at " once to plunge a dagger in the breaſt, " than after transfixing it with the ſcorpion " ſtings of diſappointed happineſs, to leave " it to expire of the mortal, though ſlow " conſuming venom? Behold this family " —ſee the weight of ſorrow which, heaped " by thee on their reverend heads, bend " them to the grave. But when I think " of Delia, that expiring angel, my indig- " nation burſts all bounds!"—

" O ſpare me!—ſpare me!" cried Lady Harriot, wildly interrupting him—" Oh— " have you no mercy—no compaſſion?"

" With what meaſure you mete," replied the Dean, " it ſhall be meaſured " unto you again.—Where ſlumbered the " mercy and compaſſion you now dare to " obſecrate, when you twined yourſelf into " the unguarded boſom of that gentle un- " ſuſpicious creature, in the impious in- " tention of betraying her to ruin!—Hea- " vens! is there a crime ſo baſe—ſo infer- " nal as ingratitude?—She cheriſhed—ſhe " eſteemed you, ſhe generouſly confided

" in

" in your imagined worth; but how have
" you requited her tenderneſs?—how have
" you rewarded her generoſity?—by cruelly
" overwhelming her with irreparable in-
" jury, and obnubitating for ever, each
" riſing dawn of felicity! But the effects
" of your perfidy will defeat the intention
" of it, and emancipated by death, your
" poor perſecuted victim will ſhortly break
" the chain which binds her to a world of
" turpitude and woe. Gentleſt of human
" beings! when moved to compaſſion by
" an accumulation of ſufferings ſo unme-
" rited, the Father of Mercies recalls to
" himſelf a ſoul devoted to his worſhip,
" ſhall we repine at its releaſe from ſorrow!
" No, rather let us rejoice at the bleſſed
" manumiſſion, and celebrate its triumph
" with ſongs of thankſgiving! Were not
" the bleſſings of this life profuſely poured
" around her?—did not fortune contend
" with nature which ſhould moſt liberally
" endow their favourite idol? Vain pro-
" digality!—Unſtable enjoyments!—one
" fatal arrow rankling in the boſom, em-

" poiſoned

" poiſoned each ſource of ſublunary joy,
" and darkened the terreſtrial paradiſe, to
" a lugubrious vale of tears!—But ſuch
" is the lot of humanity, and to repine at
" inevitable calamity is puſillanimous.
" Shall we expect celeſtial ſerenity in this
" perturbed clime; in this afflictive ſtate
" of trial and probation?" ' Does a foun-
' tain ſend forth ſweet water and bitter?
' —Do men gather figs of thiſtles?'—
" Will the fruits of divine felicity bloom
" amidſt the thorny anxieties of human
" life? — we ſtretch forth our hands to
" pluck them and reap—diſappointment
" and deſpair?—Yes, pure ſpirit, theſe
" were thy portion—perfidiouſly deceived,
" and vilely betrayed by a monſter of in-
" gratitude! ſoon ſhalt thou find an aſylum
" amidſt congenial angels!—Beautiful and
" beloved — innocent and immaculate;
" meet offering for the power who re-
" quired for his ſacrifice, a lamb without
" blemiſh!"

During this apoſtrophe, Lady Harriot lifted not up her face, which, covered with her

her handkerchief, she reclined on the table. Perceiving her without motion, I flew to her and found her almost senseless. The Dean assisted me in conveying her to the window for air;—she recovered.

"Will she then die," cried she, wildly starting from us and flinging herself with violence on the floor,—"will she then die, "and am I her murderess?—Why do I "live to see the hateful light! open, O "earth, and hide me in thy centre! Oh "horror! horror!"

She fell into strong convulsions. It is the privilege of misery to extinguish resentment, and anger towards the unfortunate cannot long exist in a noble bosom. The reproaches with which a moment before the Dean had loaded Lady Harriot, were now directed to himself.

"Unhappy woman!" said he, "was "not the consciousness of thy errors suf- "ficiently grievous—the burden of them "sufficiently intolerable—why then thus "aggravate the anguish of thy soul with "acrimonious invective and rancorous re- "crimination!

"crimination!—It was ungenerous—it "was inhuman!"

We were obliged to ſummon the ſervants to her aſſiſtance, and had her conveyed to her apartment, without alarming Lady Bloomfield or Mrs. Sophia, who were very ill able to ſuſtain any additional diſtreſs.—That evening the poſt brought your letters—it is unneceſſary to ſpeak of the happy alteration they produced. Again the cloud of ſorrow was diſpelled from each brow, and we congratulated each other on our approaching felicity. Oh with what pleaſurable ſenſations ſhall I behold theſe ineſtimable friends claſp the darling of their age to their venerable boſoms!

The Dean viſited Lady Harriot in her apartment, to congratulate her on the joyful intelligence, and apologiſe for his harſhneſs.—Read this letter to Julia. Surely if her revenge is not inſatiable, ſhe will be ſatisfied with the ſufferings of this unhappy woman.

Let me know the time appointed for your departure preciſely, that I may meet you

you at Holy-head; never more will I truſt you on the deceitful element, without

Your ever faithful

H. WENTWORTH.

LETTER CVI.

Mrs. Wentworth to *the Rev. Mr. Wentworth.*

THE misfortune I apprehended has overwhelmed us, but more deeply than my fears had preſaged. Laſt night Lord Archer was ſeized with violent ſhiverings and agonizing pains in his head and ſtomach; we ſent immediately for Doctor Harrington, who was greatly alarmed, and ſeemed apprehenſive of a mortification in ſome vital part. Two other phyſicians were called in: it is impoſſible to arrive at their real opinion; but I believe they think him in the moſt imminent danger. We ſtrove at firſt to keep Delia ignorant of his ſituation; but her penetration was not to be

be eluded. She refuſes to leave his bed-ſide, except when he obliges her, and even then, inſtead of endeavouring to recruit her ſpirits by repoſe, thoſe ſhort intervals of abſence are ſpent in tears and ſupplications to Heaven for his recovery. And yet, inſtead of growing worſe, ſhe appears to recover; it ſeems as if it were a triumph of the ſtrength of the ſoul over the weakneſs of the body.

I remarked it to Doctor Harrington.—"It is true, Madam," ſaid he, "inſtances of this kind have ſometimes occurred in the courſe of my practice; but it "is a temporary triumph, and ſhe will "ſuffer for it hereafter."

Lord Revell, who was overtaken by Julia's meſſenger, is returned. He was almoſt diſtracted at the ſituation in which he found his friend. O, my deareſt Wentworth, what is there worth living for, when that generous ſympathy which alone can ſmooth our paſſage through this world of care, becomes the ſource of our moſt poignant anxieties and ſevereſt afflictions!—

without it we are worſe than brutes, and with it we are wretched.—Julia interrupts me.

Gracious heaven! what new calamity! —Doctor Harrington has given it as his poſitive opinion, that Lord Archer cannot live two days. He adviſes us to let Delia know his danger. He is at preſent with his patient.—He is kind and benevolent; perhaps we may prevail on him to undertake this dreadful taſk. Oh, my friend, why could not you come with me? Your perſuaſive piety would have aſſiſted me to conſole our unhappy friend. When I attempt to ſpeak to her, tears force a paſſage, and I cannot utter a ſentence!

Julia calls me; Doctor Harrington is come out of Lord Archer's apartment.

I found him with Julia and Revell in the drawing-room. Julia ſat with her handkerchief to her eyes.

"Oh Doctor," ſaid I, "is there then "no hope?"

"I have

"I have heard, Madam, that whilſt there "is life there is hope; but ſome diſorders "preclude even the melancholy ſatisfac- "tion of a poſſibility."

This confirmation of our misfortune, ſtruck a chill and deadly damp to my heart. I ſunk into a chair almoſt immoveable. Delia entered; ſhe looked around from one to the other with an air of dignified compoſure, which aſtoniſhed us; our eyes fell beneath her penetrating glances. Revell ſtarted from his ſeat and went to the window.—She ſeated herſelf, and after a pauſe, "Your countenances, my friends, "render enquiry unneceſſay, and expreſs "my misfortune in characters too legible "to be miſconſtrued.—There is now but "one circumſtance which I require to be "informed of.—Doctor, how long has "your patient to—?"

Her voice faultered, and ſhe could not conclude the ſentence.

He endeavoured to anſwer, but his utterance failed.

"Am I the only perſon," ſhe reſumed, "who can ſpeak on this afflicting ſubject "without tears?—Am I alone unfeel- "ing and inſenſible! Speak, Doctor, ſpeak "to me without reſerve—you ſee, I can "now bear any thing."

"You deceive yourſelf, Lady Archer, "but you cannot deceive me; your he- "roiſm is the heroiſm of deſpair. Com- "plainings, tremors, ſwoonings, are the "natural expreſſions of grief; but this un- "natural calmneſs is more deſtructive to "the conſtitution, than the moſt animated "tranſports of ſorrow; do we not diſcover "through this ſuperficial compoſure a "breaking heart!—Weep, Lady Archer, "your calamity is heavy—Lord Archer "muſt leave you—perhaps ere to-morrow "night!—Can you not yet weep?" con- tinued he, approaching her.

"No," ſaid ſhe, putting her hand to her head—"no—I think I ſhall never weep "again; the ſource of my tears is ex- "hauſted—they once flowed on every tri- "vial vexation; but now, though I ſhould

"behold

" behold my huſband, my parents, my " child—though you too, my Henrietta, " lay a lifeleſs corſe extended at my feet— " I could not drop one tear!"

" This is too much," ſaid Doctor Harrington, in a low voice, turning from her as he ſpoke. " Nature cannot bear to be " thus high ſtrained; this is the grief which " ſhakes the ſeat of reaſon." After a pauſe, he whiſpered Julia to bring the child. I met her at the door as ſhe returned. I took the ſmiling innocent and approaching my friend, dropped on my knees beſide her.

" O Delia," I cried, " thou ſiſter of " my ſoul!—thou deareſt partner of my " boſom, can you refuſe a tear of ſympa- " thy to the ſorrows of your friend! If " not for your own affliction—O weep for " ours—for theſe generous friends," pointing to Julia and Revell, who with me had fallen at her knees;—" for your parents— " for your child, which ſoon muſt be an " orphan."

" Oh, Henrietta!—Oh, my friend!"—whilſt her boſom ſeemed to ſtruggle with its weight of ſorrows, " you have touched " the ſtring—oh my friends—my parents " —muſt I no more!—oh my child!—" my orphan child!"—

She hugged it cloſe to her boſom, and the tears guſhed in torrents from her eyes. She wept inceſſantly, at leaſt an hour, and then appearing entirely exhauſted, we perſuaded her to lie down, and ſhe ſunk into a ſlumber.—Julia tells me ſhe is awake and calls for me.

Friday.

Lord Archer is no more!—This day—but I cannot now write.

Saturday.

I will now, that I have recruited my ſpirits with a little reſt, and armed my mind with thoſe ſentiments of piety and reſignation, with which you, my beloved inſtructor, have provided me; I will now endeavour to deſcribe the ſcene which preceded the

the diſſolution of the moſt generous of mankind.

All Thurſday he continued in violent torture, with ſhort intervals of eaſe—every ceſſation from pain he employed in endeavouring to conſole and reconcile us to his departure. We all ſat up with him; in the morning he grew ſtill worſe—and the phyſicians told us he could not live another night. At two o'clock his pain left him and he declared himſelf perfectly at eaſe. About five in the evening, Julia and I were ſummoned to his apartment. Delia knelt at his pillow and ſupported his head with her arm. He was ſtill exempt from pain, and his countenance, though pale and deadly, was placid and ſerene—it had even an air of triumph. As Julia and I ſtood by his bedſide, Doctor Harrington and Lord Revell entered the room, and to our inexpreſſible aſtoniſhment were accompanied by Bloomfield. Delia faintly glanced her eyes towards the door, but betrayed no emotion at the preſence of Bloomfield, except a little ſurprize, whilſt Lord Archer

examined her with attention, then turning to Bloomfield, who, pale and trembling and ſupported by Lord Revell, approached his bedſide.

" Ought I not to reproach you, Colonel, " for neglect of me?" ſaid he, reaching out his hand to him with a ſmile, as he ſpoke—" at a ſeaſon like this, my other " friends needed not an invitation."

By theſe words it appeared evident, that Bloomfield had been ſent for by Lord Archer.—He made no reply, but ſunk in violent agitation on a ſeat cloſe by the bed. Lord Archer, after a pauſe, during which he ſeemed to contemplate us with the compaſſionate tenderneſs of a ſuperior being, turned to Bloomfield.—

" Bloomfield," ſaid he, ardently graſping his hand, " my generous rival! for " that we once were rivals, I now know " too well,—I ſummoned you not hither " to ſolicit your forgiveneſs, becauſe, con- " vinced that my uſurpation of your rights " was involuntary, your boſom is too noble " to harbour reſentment.—Bloomfield, we

" are

" are both the martyrs of deceit; but ſuf-
" fer filial piety to draw a veil over this
" dreadful ſubject."

Delia ſtarted and gazed in aſtoniſhment, whilſt her boſom throbbed with the wildeſt emotions.

" Yes, thou dear ſuffering excellence!—
" thou victim devoted to avarice and pride!
" the ſecret conflicts of that pure, unſpot-
" ted, generous—too generous boſom, are
" revealed to me. O Delia, hadſt thou
" been leſs nobly impartial—leſs fervent in
" friendſhip—leſs enthuſiaſtic in gratitude,
" we both, perhaps, had lived, and lived
" to peace! Yet that I loved you, Delia,
" with a pure, diſintereſted paſſion—that
" I eſteemed you as your virtues merited,
" and honoured your worth as it deſerved,
" your heart muſt bear me witneſs. From
" the hour of our union to that fatal diſ-
" covery, which deſtroyed the illuſion
" which formed the baſis of my peace, I
" viewed you with ſtill encreaſing admira-
" tion—I loved you with augmenting
" fondneſs. With your hand I knew I

" received not all your heart; nor, too " candid to ſtoop to deception, did you " promiſe me more than your friendſhip; " that friendſhip then, which, conſtituted " the ſupreme felicity of my life, I che- " riſhed with the fondeſt aſſiduity, and " received each trifling inſtance of recipro- " cal affection with the rapture of a lover, " who diſcovers a riſing paſſion in the bo- " ſom he adores. Such were the ſenti- " ments which by combining hope with " fruition, and pointing my wiſhes to ſtill " higher attainments in felicity, precluded " ſatiety, and continued to the huſband " the tranſports of the lover. O deceitful " and tranſitory calm!—O bliſs, too ex- " alted to remain unpolluted!" His voice failed, he ſunk backwards—and turning his face from us, remained ſome minutes ſilent; then reſuming his compoſure, he thus proceeded.

" On the morning of the day you took " your illneſs, I left you with reluctance " and conſented with regret even to ſo ſhort " a ſeparation. I embraced you before I

" went

" went; how little did I imagine it was
" the laſt ray of joy my breaſt was ever
" doomed to feel!"

" I went, you may remember, to acce-
" lerate the final ſettlement of my affairs,
" impatient to gratify your deſire of re-
" turning to your friends. I had pro-
" ceeded three miles on my way, when I
" recollected that I had forgotten ſome of
" the moſt material papers. I was atten-
" ded but by one ſervant, who carried a
" portmanteau full of deeds and leaſes,
" and determining to ſend him to Briſtol
" before me, returned alone for the papers
" I had forgotten. I took the ſhorteſt
" way, and rode through the park with-
" out meeting any one. The garden gate
" was open; I entered it and went up the
" back ſtairs, but I could not paſs the
" dreſſing room where I had left you at
" work without going to bid you a ſecond
" adieu. I went and found you had left
" it, but perceiving the papers which I
" ſaw were chiefly written in my mother's
" hand, lying ſcattered on the floor, and

" imagining they were letters you had re-
" ceived from her during my abſence, I
" took them up—I read them—but the
" ſenſations with which I read them are
" indeſcribable; I flung them from me,
" and flying down ſtairs, eſcaped the ob-
" ſervation of the domeſtics, who, I ſup-
" poſe, were occupied by your illneſs, and
" mounting my horſe, which I had left at
" the garden gate, committed myſelf to his
" direction, almoſt devoid of reflection or
" ſenſation. O Delia!—but hovering as
" I am on the confines of immortality—
" ſhall I revert to the miſeries of this hu-
" man ſcene, which, ere long ſhall be
" ſnatched for ever from my ſight. I re-
" turned towards night; I ſaw you, Delia;
" I ſaw deſpair and ſorrow pictured in that
" angel countenance. The gentle tender-
" neſs with which you received and endea-
" voured to conſole me, pierced me to the
" heart; it is true, I knew I was poſſeſſed
" of your pity,—but for its love, your
" breaſt had another object. Yet think
" not, injured, unfortunate pair! think not

" I was

" I was inſenſible to your mutual wrongs
" —your mutual ſufferings! I compaſ-
" ſionated—I eſteemed—I loved you —I
" did more—In the agony of my ſoul I pro-
" ſtrated myſelf before the throne of the Di-
" vinity, and entreated him, by reſuming
" the being which he gave me, to reſtore
" you once more to each other and to happi-
" neſs. The ſupplications which my heart
" poured forth in the fervor of its miſery,
" were graciouſly heard and mercifully
" granted;—my death is inevitable—what
" now remains but to render you, ere I
" depart for ever, all the juſtice in my
" power. Come then," continued he, in
a more elevated tone of voice, taking a
hand of each and endeavouring to join
them as he ſpoke—" come then, ye amiable,
" ye divided lovers—come and receive in
" each other, the reward of your truth and
" of your conſtancy, the compenſation of
" your ſufferings!—Delia, I ſwear by every
" thing moſt ſacred, I received not this
" hand at the altar with ſuch elevated rap-
" ture, as I now reſign it to my generous
" rival!

" rival!—Come then, and let the man who " was the involuntary cauſe of your aliena- " tion have the happineſs of re-uniting " you!"

Again he attempted to join their hands, but they ſhrunk from each other.

" Never!" cried Delia, whilſt her bo- ſom heaved with inexpreſſible agony, and her eyes were turned with looks of unutter- able tenderneſs towards Lord Archer— " Never—Oh never!—you alone—no ſe- " cond union—O live! O Archer! Oh " my huſband!"—

She flung her arms round him, and claſping him paſſionately to her boſom, fainted away.—Bloomfield ſtarted and re- peating her words with a look of frenzy, exclaimed.—" Never—never! ſhall Delia " wed the murderer of her huſband! Hor- " rible! unnatural conjunction!—O ne- " ver, never! O thoſe letters!—thoſe em- " poiſoned letters! Heavens! ſhall my " venom murder all around, and yet not " operate on myſelf!"

Lord

Lord Revell and Doctor Harrington drew him out of the room almoſt by force.

Archer and Delia lay claſped in each other's arms; he raiſed his head once more. "Adieu, my tender and generous friends— "in reſpect to my memory, O conceal the "errors of my unhappy mother—and tell "her I recommend her to Heaven with my "expiring breath. To you I remit the "care of this poor diſtracted mourner; "ſooth her with your tendefneſs, and ſuf- "fer her not to ſacrifice the future hap- "pineſs of her life to a romantic delicacy."

"Alas, my Lord," ſaid Doctor Harrington, "the ſacrifice would not be great "—her life is ebbing faſt;—had your de- "parture been deferred but a little, you "would have gone together."

"O Delia!" claſping her with ſtill more paſſion to his boſom, "art thou then mine "in death! Shall we together be releaſed "—explore new worlds together."

His violent emotions were too great for his exhauſted ſtrength: they burſt theſe inconceivable bonds by which the ſoul is united

united to the body and releaſed the ſtrug-gling captive. We conveyed Delia to her apartment—it was long before ſhe ſhewed any ſymptom of returning life; but ſhe is now reſtored to reaſon and to miſery.

I cannot write more—my eyes are almoſt blind with weeping. O Wentworth, what trials await your fortitude and friendſhip; you muſt be the meſſenger of this misfortune to the venerable family at Bloomfield.

H. WENTWORTH.

LETTER CVII.

From the Same.

SIX tedious and melancholy days have elapſed ſince I laſt wrote. In that interval I have received your letter. Where is now the happineſs you ſo fondly pictured to yourſelf! Alas! the Dean's apoſtrophe was prophetic! Wentworth, we muſt loſe her! — Yet were it not for Doctor

Doctor Harrington I ſhould ſtill indulge ſome hopes of happineſs; I cannot think her ſo ill—not ſo very ill but that ſhe might yet live; but he warns me not to flatter myſelf, and tells me her decline is rapid. She is now calm and tranquil—ſhe ſpeaks to us—ſhe conſoles us—ſhe even endeavours to ſmile. I cannot reſtrain my emotions in her preſence; I leave her—I run precipitately through the parks and gardens, as if I could hope to fly from my own feelings, but my grief gains ſtrength from every oppoſition, and becomes each moment more irreſiſtibly poignant. Lord Archer has bequeathed all his perſonal fortune, except ſome legacies to particular friends, amongſt whom you are not forgotton, to Delia. Lord Revell, Mr. Bloomfield and you are appointed joint executors of his will, and the guardians of his child. Lord Revell was from the firſt the confident of the ſecret affliction that ſunk him to the grave; and from him it was that he learned Bloomfield's return to Bath.

The

The ſcene deſcribed in my laſt produced a violent effect on Bloomfield. For two days he was quite diſtracted; but his reaſon is now reſtored to him. Julia ſays, that at intervals he deludes himſelf with the moſt flattering hopes, and fearful of recalling the diſtraction of his mind, ſhe does not dare to undeceive him.—In the paroxyſms of his diſorder he ſometimes imagines himſelf married to Delia, and bitterly reproaches his ſiſter and his friend Mr. Morley, at whoſe houſe he is, for detaining him from his bride. Twice he was detected in endeavouring to eſcape. Apprehenſive of accidents, we have acquainted Delia with his misfortune, which affected her extremely. She enquires for me—Adieu.

H. WENTWORTH.

LETTER CVIII.

Lady Harriot Bloomfield to *Lady Archer.*

THOUGH oppreſſed with the conſciouſneſs of guilt, and overwhelmed with

with the deepeſt affliction; though a prey to the keeneſt remorſe, and diſtracted with horrors almoſt infernal, ſhall the wretch who has undone you, plead for pardon! O unavailing tears! O fruitleſs repentance! Can ye heal the boſoms I have wounded? Can ye reſtore to life the ſon I have murdered!

As the condemned Dives lifted his eyes to the manſions and ſupplicated the mercy of the bleſſed—amidſt the horrors of my conſcience—the deſolation of my ſoul—I look up to that ſerene elevation where thou art placed by thy ſuperior virtues—methinks I behold thee incircled with the glories of the beatitude that awaits thee—and entreat thee to allay the tortures of my ſoul with pity and forgiveneſs.

O Delia, can you emulate in mercy the power you adore—can you forgive your murdereſs!

HARRIOT BLOOMFIELD.

LET-

LETTER CIX.

Lady Archer to *Lady Harriot Bloomfield.*

CAN I forgive you, Lady Harriot! Would to Heaven you could as eaſily forgive yourſelf!

Oh, too ſevere are the ſufferings already inflicted by the chaſtening hand of Heaven! why then thus aggravate them with the horrors of imagined guilt? If the vileſt tranſgreſſions are done away by affliction and repentance—are not your errors already obliterated by the ſincerity of your contrition? "Whom the Lord loveth he "chaſteneth"—receive, then, theſe ſevere viſitations, as the evidences of his mercy, not as the teſtimonies of his wrath.

Your mind, naturally the ſeat of every virtue, was unhappily warped by the pernicious maxims of a world through which you had no friendly guide to direct your inexperienced ſteps. Your maternal love (how readily can we pardon a weakneſs that flows

flows from ſo amiable a principle;) your maternal love inſpired you with ambitious views: they were gratified; but Heaven, by rendering you wretched in the fruition of your wiſhes, has opened your mind to conviction, and diſplayed the vanity of human wiſdom.

My child ſhall never know the unhappy circumſtances of her parents death; ſhe ſhall be taught to love and to revere you; the fatal ſecret ſhall be confined to a few faithful boſoms.—Oh calm then the emotions of your agitated breaſt—indulge not a deſpair that alarms me for your reaſon! Your ſorrows have effaced from my memory every ſenſe of reſentment, and left no recollection—except of endearing inſtances of your maternal ſolicitude.

If we are deſtined never more to meet, receive my laſt adieu—my final forgiveneſs. Let your affection for me devolve to my child. Let not a falſe humiliation render you unfit for the duties of ſociety, by enervating your mind. Vain is the paſſion of repentance without the fruits of it. True

penitence

penitence invigorates the mind and communicates an energy to its powers, which are depreſſed by ſuperſtition, and exhauſted by enthuſiaſm. It waſtes not itſelf in vain complaints and ſeas of unavailing tears; but by efforts of active virtue wreſts forgiveneſs from the hand of Heaven.

Conſole my father, and, Oh! when I am gone, endeavour to ſupply my place and be a daughter to my honoured friends.

DELIA.

LETTER CX.

Mrs. Wentworth to *Mr. Wentworth* *.

IF the ſorrows of my ſoul had admitted of aggravation, your letter would have brought an addition of affliction; but there

* The editor of theſe volumes apprehenſive of afflicting too deeply the ſenſibility of his readers, ſuppreſſes all the letters which are not abſolutely eſſential to the narrative.

are

are degrees in misery which cannot be exceeded, and all the accumulated misfortunes with which it is in the power of fate to persecute me, would render me at this moment but little more wretched than I am.

This morning Delia, whose too evident decline no longer permits me to flatter myself with the most distant hope of her recovery, had a long private conference with Doctor Harrington. On his leaving her apartment I immediately went to her and found Julia and Revell already with her. She was seated with the little Delia in her lap. She raised her eyes, which were fixed on the child with looks of the fondest maternal love, at my approach. She held out her hand to me with a smile expressive at once of benignity and resignation. I seated myself beside her; but I could not speak and turned from her.

"Did you speak to Doctor Harrington "to-day, Henrietta?" said she

I replied, I had not seen him.

"My

"My friend! my Henrietta," ſaid ſhe, tenderly preſſing my hand, "with plea-
"ſure and with pride I look back to that
"fond, that exquiſitely endearing connec-
"tion which ſince our infancy has ſub-
"ſiſted between us; a connection which,
"perhaps, not death itſelf has power to
"diſſolve. To amuſe you with hopes
"which muſt ſo ſoon be diſappointed
"would be cruel.—I have had a converſa-
"tion with Doctor Harrington—ſome little
"time, perhaps, I yet may live—perhaps
"a month—perhaps a week. Oh, if I
"could diveſt myſelf of theſe tender re-
"grets—theſe fond remembrances, with
"what rapture would I reſign myſelf to
"the diſpenſations of the Almighty, and
"fly for refuge to that tranquil ſanctuary
"where 'the wicked ceaſe from troubling,
'and the weary are at reſt.' Once before,
"it is true, I trembled on the verge of
"eternity; but the ſentiments with which
"I contemplated the diſſolution that ap-
"proached me were widely different. I
"looked backwards—the retroſpect ex-

"hibited

" hibited an uninterrupted view of un-
" clouded felicity, enlightened by youth-
" ful imagination, and adorned by gay
" dreams of viſionary enjoyment; but the
" ſcene was now ſhifted, and my future
" proſpects appeared wrapped in impene-
" trable darkneſs. The grave, indeed,
" opened to my view its friendly aſylum
" —I felt myſelf ſhuddering on its dreary
" confines, yet ſcarcely dared to wiſh to
" find a refuge in its boſom; for adverſity
" had opened my mind to conviction, and
" reaſon, which had hitherto been lulled by
" the deluſions of fancy, now firſt awoke
" from her trance. My paſt exiſtence ap-
" peared to me an uſeleſs dream diſtin-
" guiſhed by no exertion, and dignified by
" no virtue. My good and bad qualities I
" conſidered as negative at the beſt.—
" Could my mind be flattered by an ex-
" emption from vice which was the con-
" ſequence of my guarded ſituation.
" Could it exult in the conſciouſneſs of
" virtues which were prompted by inſtinct,
" inculcated by precept and enforced by

 " example?

" example? I had made no election.—I
" had reſiſted no temptation; and if I had
" hitherto preſerved inviolate the integrity
" of my ſoul, I could derive to myſelf no
" merit from an innocence which was the
" unavoidable reſult of my circumſtances.
" If ſuch was the light in which my vir-
" tues appeared when weighed in the ba-
" lance of candid reflection, the retreſpec-
" tion of my faults was yet more humilia-
" ting. I reflected with contrition on the
" thoughtleſs inſenſibility in which my
" hours had glided away;—thoſe hours of
" which I ſo ſoon expected to be deman-
" ded, a ſevere account at the laſt awful
" tribunal!—unmindful of the rights of
" ſociety, of the duties I owed my fellow-
" creatures and myſelf; and only marked
" and occupied by romantic notions of
" partial enjoyment. Thoſe plans, it is
" true, were now utterly and eternally de-
" ſtroyed, and had left in their room a
" dreadful vacuity! Yet I dared not wiſh
" to ruſh into the preſence of that Power
" who had conferred on me exiſtence, for

" purpoſes

" purpoſes far different from thoſe to which
" I had employed it. But when my en-
" feebled conſtitution, reduced to the laſt
" extremity, threatened an immediate and
" inevitable diſſolution, my ſoul humbled
" itſelf with pleaſure to the Divine diſpen-
" ſation; I flattered myſelf that my ſuf-
" ferings were accepted as an atonement,
" and that the Father of Mercies, ſatisfied
" with my contrition, and the ſincerity of
" my purpoſed amendment, would kindly
" call me to a better world.

" Theſe conſolatory reflections recalled
" the compoſure of my mind, and to this
" compoſure, perhaps, my recovery may
" be attributed. Death had appeared to
" me inevitable, and I was ſurprized to
" find myſelf once more reſtored to life.
" I received the gift with thankfulneſs,
" and in this ſevere viſitation, religion
" pointed out the correcting hand of a fa-
" ther that chaſteneth the child of his love.
" I reflected on the part I ſhould probably
" maintain on the theatre of life. I ſaw
" myſelf the laſt hope of my family, and

" the apparent heir of its large poſſeſſions.
" To me its views were directed; on me
" my beloved and reſpected parents relied
" for ſupport and conſolation amidſt the
" infirmities and ſorrows of their declining
" years. Here was a ſphere for the exertion
" of the virtues I meditated; and if I
" could not entirely ſubdue my unhappy
" paſſion, I determined never to ſuffer it to
" riſe in oppoſition to duties at once ſo in-
" tereſting and ſo noble. But the taſk was
" more difficult than I imagined, for to re-
" ſtore the tranquillity of my friends, it
" was neceſſary I ſhould firſt recover my
" own. 'To a mind, young, weak and
" enervated by pleaſure, how difficult is
" the practice of a reſtraint which obliges
" it to combat its feelings, and precludes
" at the ſame time the ſad luxury of ſor-
" row.' The ſacred duties which animated
" my efforts could alone have enabled me
" to ſupport a conflict ſo ſevere.' And
" yet, my friends, what was the reſult of
" this conflict?—A ſuperficial triumph—
" an artificial victory over the exterior of

" my

" my conduct, whilſt my heart remained " a prey to ſorrow and diſquietude—but " time and the fancied unworthineſs of the " man I loved, reſtored my mind to tran- " quillity, though not to happineſs.

" To the friendſhip and gratitude to " which I conſecrated my ſoul, I ſacrificed " its ſelfiſh feelings, and ſmothered each " murmur that oppoſed that nobler am- " bition of my breaſt, which had for its " object the felicity of thoſe I loved. In- " fluenced by theſe principles, I gave my " hand to Lord Archer, the ſon of my " imagined friend and benefactreſs; and " if my heart refuſed the tribute of affec- " tion, his virtue, his love, his elevated " worth demanded, it was the weakneſs of " nature, not the crime of choice. Why," continued ſhe, diſſolving in tears—" why " do I not ſtill retain that inſenſibility;— " why this too late and unavailing tender- " neſs—why could I not learn to prize " that worth till after it was loſt for " ever?"

She ſat ſome minutes ſilent, then thus reſumed.—

" I now reflect with pleaſure on my paſt " exiſtence.—I place my affiance in the " mercy of my Creator—and with humble " confidence and joy—' His call I follow ' to the world unknown!' What now re- " mains but to regulate ſome little tempo- " ral affairs, and reconcile you, my faith- " ful friends, to the heavenly will. I once " indulged the ſoothing idea of returning " to my native country, and breathing my " laſt ſighs on the boſoms of my parents; " but my better thoughts reproved the ſel- " fiſh wiſh. Ah, ſhall I wound their " tender ſouls with the view of my ex- " piring agonies—my dying groans!"

She paŭſed again and wiped away the tears which trickled from her eyes; then caſting them on the child with a look of the ſweeteſt benignity—" What a divine " example of the power of holy friendſhip " is that, which is recorded of the ſacred " perſon, who, amidſt the laſt ſtruggles of " expiring nature, devolved the protection

" of

" of his mother on the diſciple whom he
" loved.—Such, Henrietta, is the legacy
" I bequeath to you. Behold your child!"
preſenting the little Delia to my offered
arms—" My child, behold your mother!
" To you, my ever dear and ever faithful
" friend, I conſign the laſt dear pledge of
" that affection, which I hope ſhall ſurvive
" the grave. Take her, my Henrietta, let
" the little prattler amuſe with the play-
" fulneſs of infancy the affliction of my
" parents; after their deceaſe ſhe is wholly
" yours. Teach her the nobleſt uſe of
" riches, arm her mind againſt luxury and
" pride, but Oh! above all, impreſs it
" with the ſacred ſtamp of truth, and in-
" ſpire it with horror at treachery and diſ-
" ſimulation. You have a ſon, formed by
" ſuch parents, his conduct muſt be ex-
" emplary; perhaps a ſimilarity of mind
" may inſpire a congenial affection—per-
" haps this little babe may one day call
" you mother."

I took the dear and ſacred depoſit and claſped it cloſe to my boſom—I endeavoured

to ſpeak, but felt almoſt ſuffocated by my emotions.

Revell and Julia ſhed torrents of tears.

Oh, Wentworth, I ſhall, ere long return to you, with this child of my love—this deareſt conſolation of my wounded heart! Blame me not, my friend, if when I behold this human angel hovering on the verge of the tomb, I view her with more fond, more tender ſenſations, than any other object ever excited; if ſhe is dearer to my ſoul than you, my child, and all the world beſide.

No, my friend, you muſt not obey the movements of your heart—you muſt not join me here.—Shall you deſert our friends in their affliction.—No, my deareſt Wentworth, though we are unhappy, let us at leaſt, have the conſolation of reflecting, that we are not ungrateful or ungenerous.

Adieu,—this is, perhaps, the laſt letter you ſhall receive from me. If Delia dies I cannot write it!

H. WENTWORTH.

LET-

LETTER CXI.

Lord Revell to *the Rev. Mr. Wentworth.*

DEAR WENTWORTH,

THOUGH melancholy the office and repugnant to my feelings, at Mrs. Wentworth's deſire I have undertaken to write to you. My afflictions ſince we parted, have been ſevere; I have followed to the grave the friend of my heart, and beheld the moſt admirable of her ſex ſinking beneath an accumulation of evils too weighty for mortality.

Where, my friend, is the boaſted pride of philoſophy!—I have ſeen the equanimity of a Socrates emulated by a girl!—I have ſeen this gentleſt of her gentle ſex, animated by the conſciouſneſs of internal worth, and ſuſtained by the ſublime conſolations of piety, ſupport her character in the moſt trying ſcenes with a dignity which would have done honour to a ſage. If, as I have

often been told, the religion of which you are a miniſter, is an impoſture, what reaſonable being would wiſh to renounce a deluſion which gives us on earth a foretaſte of the excellence and felicity it promiſes hereafter?

Yeſterday, at Lady Archer's requeſt, her will was executed: of the ten thouſand pounds of which, by her marriage ſettlement, the abſolute diſpoſal was reſerved to herſelf, ſhe has bequeathed ſeven to you and Mrs. Wentworth: to her favourite woman ſhe has left five hundred pounds, and to her adopted orphans, three hundred each. To moſt of the ſervants, as well here as at Bloomfield, ſhe has left legacies proportionable to their merits and circumſtances; and the remainder the Dean and you are to apply to charitable uſes. To Julia and me ſhe has bequeathed ſome jewels of value and to her daughter all the perſonal fortune of our late friend, whoſe eſtate by right hereditary, devolved to his child. You, Mr. Bloomfield and I are appointed

appointed executors to hers, as alſo to Lord Archer's will.

This melancholy ceremonial adjuſted, her mind appeared perfectly ſerene and ſatisfied, except when her repoſe was interrupted by the diſtreſs which we could not conceal. Your poor Henrietta's moſt ſenſibly affected her. Thus, though each hour brought with it an addition of pain and langour, her ſoul ſeemed to triumph over the infirmities of its earthly companion, and acquire new ſtrength from the weakneſs of the body. Often, when inſenſible to her own ſufferings and diſtreſſes, I have ſeen her dying eyes effuſe the mildeſt beams of tenderneſs and love, when I have heard from her quivering lips the language of ſeraphic wiſdom, and ſeen,—" the ſmile " of angels on a mortal face," I have gazed on her with admiration, and contemplated her with reverential awe.

When her infirmities allowed her a reſpite from pain, her favourite amuſement was ſolemn muſic. When able, ſhe played and Julia and Henrietta ſung, for ſhe has long

ſince loſt that enchanting voice which ſeemed to realize the fabled ſyrens. This morning Julia and Henrietta performed at her requeſt that divine Ode of Pope's, the dying Chriſtian to his ſoul. She reclined on a ſopha during the performance, and her countenance was expreſſive of ſomething ſupernatural.

They were interrupted by a noiſe amongſt the domeſtic's below ſtairs—and inſtantly afterwards Bloomfield, who had moſt unfortunately eluded the vigilance of his friends at Bath, ruſhing into the room, flew to the ſopha, and flinging himſelf on his knees, paſſionately exclaimed—

"Have I then found you, my Delia, "my beloved, my promiſed bride!"

The flying ſpirit which, entranced in holy exſtacy had ſeemed to riſe by anticipation to its native ſphere, recalled from its excurſion by this wild addreſs, returned to re-animate her features, and ſhe gazed on Bloomfield with an indeſcribeable expreſſion of pity and terror in her countenance.

"Will

"Will you not ſpeak to me Delia," continued he—"are you not mine by every "tender—by every ſacred tie?—beloved "from infancy—betrothed almoſt from "childhood—and though alienated by the "falſhood of a traitreſs, reſtored to my "arms by the generoſity of a noble rival! "O thou laſt beſt gift, ineſtimable to my "ſoul! now doubly endeared by abſence "and affliction, ſhall I again receive thee, "ſpotleſs in truth, conſtant in affection, "immaculate in honour! What ſtorms "ſhall now cloud my felicity—what rival "ſhall ſnatch thee from my boſom!"

"Alas!" ſaid Delia, bathed in tears and turning from him as ſhe ſpoke, "a rival "with whom it is in vain to contend!"

He pauſed as if to find the meaning of her words, then reſuming with a look of frenzy, he exclaimed—"I conceive you— "cruel, ungrateful—ſelfiſh—I conceive "you—that rival is the grave!—Ha!— "that altered form!—Where are the roſes "that embloomed thoſe cheeks? the fires "that darted from theſe eyes?—all with-

"ered

" ered and extinct !—Oh Delia, why theſe " tremors !—is it the cold hand of death " that preſſes heavy on thee !—O Delia, " muſt I loſe thee !"

His head ſunk on the couch beſide her, and his boſom throbbed with the keeneſt agony.

" Friend of my ſoul," cried Delia, recovering her ſtrength, and tenderly taking his hand as ſhe leaned over him, " What " ſhall I ſay to mitigate thy ſufferings ! " Oh, if a protraction of my days could " alleviate thy ſorrows—Oh, if I could " take to my boſom the load of grief that " preſſes upon thine—for thee I would " forego the heaven that opens to my view, " and linger yet awhile in ſorrow !"

" Linger in torments and for me !" exclaimed he, wildly ſtarting—" No, thou " expiring ſaint, far be the ſelfiſh wiſh. " Riſe, divine ſpirit," continued he, gazing on her with an enthuſiaſtic veneration ; " riſe to the immortality that awaits " thee—See Heaven opens to receive the " celeſtial viſitant ! Hark !—the harps of

" k ndred

" kindred angels hail its arrival on the " coaſts of bliſs!—What—not yet tranſ- " lated!—Oh, in compaſſion to our infir- " mities you linger in this vale of ſorrow!"

He ſunk again with his face on the couch.

" Oh, Bloomfield—Oh, my friend"—cried Delia, fervently claſping him to her boſom—" I thought the bitterneſs of death " was paſt,—but thus to ſee thee—this no- " ble ſpirit thus diſturbed—and I the fa- " tal cauſe—O Bloomfield! Bloomfield!"

But how unneceſſary are theſe melancholy details.—I deſpiſe this effeminate ſoftneſs that overflows at my eyes and renders my writing almoſt unintelligible. Were my former companions to behold me thus whimpering like a boy—I am ſometimes tempted to return to their ſociety and drown in its tumultuous pleaſures thoſe too exquiſite ſenſations of my ſoftened heart. But reaſon, friendſhip—love—oppoſe the movement. O how ſupreme is the force of virtue; how peculiar is *her* influence who is never ſo devoutly worſhipped by the

the human heart, as when it groans beneath the calamities she inflicts; for hers are these tender regrets, these soul-enobling sympathies, of which the vicious herd have neither feeling nor conception.

With difficulty we tore him from her—he raged—he foamed—he execrated and reproached us. Poor Julia on her knees—but I will not recollect the affecting scene. His mind, exhausted at length by the violence of his emotions, sunk into a torpid tranquility, and he continued some hours without speaking. His friend Mr. Morley, who had pursued him from Bath, went to him; but his presence threw him into such violent agitations, that he was instantly obliged to withdraw. I waited on Mr. Morley to the stairs, and when Bloomfield found himself alone, he flew to the door and barricaded it on the inside, and all my persuasions and remonstrances, so far from inducing him to admit me, could not extort from him a single word.

Lady Archer retired to her apartment in a perturbation of spirits that must shake the

the ſands of life and precipitate her departure; but her emotions ſoon ſubſided into a divine ſerenity.

"Some," ſhe ſaid, "might think it a "culpable weakneſs in her preſent circum- "ſtances, to ſuffer her mind to be moved "by any human occurrence; but ſhe had "ever been of opinion that the duties of "humanity ſhould not be thrown aſide but "with its nature; nor could ſhe eſteem "as meritorious any exertion of the hu- "man mind which would render it unſuſ- "ceptible of gratitude and affection.—If" continued ſhe,—"drawn by divine com- "paſſion from their celeſtial manſions, an- "gels have condeſcended to viſit this ſcene "of ſorrow and imperfection, ſhall the de- "parting ſoul, too partially engroſſed by "the anticipation of the bleſſedneſs that "awaits it, refuſe the tear of ſympathy to "the ſufferings of its kindred ſpirits, yet "unreleaſed from ſorrow; and ſuch, my "friends, are the tears you have juſt now "ſeen me ſhed. There was a time, and "that not very diſtant, when they might "have

" have flowed from a ſtill ſofter motive;
" but the feelings of my heart have under-
" gone a ſtrange viciſſitude, and a paſſion,
" which I once thought interwoven with
" my exiſtence, lies buried in the tomb of
" my huſband. It is a ſacrifice I have
" made to his virtues, and could my life
" be protracted by a miracle, the ſolemn
" purpoſe of my ſoul ſhould be religiouſly
" adhered to. Had Lord Archer been
" harſh and tyrannical, had he even been
" neglectful and indifferent, I might look
" forwards without repugnance to an union
" with another; but the eſteem, the ten-
" derneſs, the veneration I cheriſh for his
" memory would render it a kind of ſa-
" crilege to devote my vows to any other
" man. You ſee, then, my dear Julia, how
" little room you have to regret my de-
" parture on your brother's account; and
" ſurely, my generous friends have ſtill leſs
" reaſon to lament it on my own. The in-
" felicity of human life has been the uni-
" verſal complaint of even the fortunate
" and happy—what then muſt be the bur-
" den to a broken heart!" " Why

"Why will not mine too burſt?" cried Henrietta—"Oh, Delia—oh, my perſecu-
"ted—martyred friend!—but I will re-
"ſign thee—I will yield thee to Heaven—
"Heaven only is worthy of thy virtues!"

I cannot repeat the ſcene that followed. Delia's magnanimity was unequal to it.—Oh, Wentworth, ſhe cannot long ſuſtain theſe trying conflicts—nor ought we to wiſh ſhe ſhould.—Julia tells me ſhe has fallen into a deep ſleep.

Bloomfield is ſtill wild and untameable; he abſolutely refuſes to leave the houſe; he bitterly inveighs againſt us all, but particularly poor Julia, whom he accuſes of having conſpired with Lady Harriot, to deſtroy his peace; he ſometimes tells his imagined tale with a plauſibility which would impoſe on the judgment, and ſtrongly intereſt the feelings of a ſtranger.

I hear a loud cry—ſome new extravagance of Bloomfield's—

She is gone, my friend!—for ever gone! Why am I thus ſhocked at a ſtroke ſo long foreſeen

foreſeen and dreaded—but then ſo ſuddenly to be ſnatched away! no pangs preceded her diſſolution—in her ſleep ſhe died.

Alarmed at the loudneſs of the ſcream of horror, I ran to the door and heard re-echoed from every part of the houſe the terrifying ſounds—never ſhall I forget the dull chill damp they ſtruck to my heart—"She's dead! ſhe's dead!"—I flew towards her apartment and met her women ruſhing out of it with frantic horror in their countenances. I entered it: the remains of her who was once the faireſt work of her Creator, lay extended on the bed in an eaſy tranquil attitude; the ſable weed in which ſhe was habited, formed a ſtriking contraſt with the ſnowy whiteneſs of the cloaths on which ſhe reclined: a ſweet ſmile remained on her features; it ſeemed a ſmile of maternal love; for the little Delia, unconſcious of its calamity, leaned on her cold boſom. On the oppoſite ſide of the bed ſtood Henrietta, her hands claſped together, her eyes fixed on the remains of her, who had been ſo inexpreſſibly dear to her,

and,

and, as if petrified by horror and amazement, motionleſs as a ſtatue. The rays of the ſetting ſun which darted brightly thro' the window, ſhone full on the body with a glorious illumination, and ſeemed to throw a kind of celeſtial ſplendor over the awfully affecting ſcene. I beheld it with a reverential awe—a religious dread!—But the ſolemn ſilence was ſoon interrupted by Bloomfield, who burſt wildly into the room followed by Julia.

"Dead!" cried he, ſtaring around with a look of horror, "Who's dead? who's "dead?" then perceiving the body—"Oh, "Delia—cruel Delia, have I found thee! "why didſt thou ſuffer them to tear me "from thee. Ha! ſhe ſleeps—how ſoft "is the reſt of innocence!—See! ſee!" pointing to the child who hid its face with playful archneſs in the boſom of its lifeleſs parent, and entwiſted its little hands in the ringlets of her hair—"that little cherub is "her guardian angel.—Tell me, thou "truant," continued he, addreſſing the child and dropping on one knee as he approached

proached the bed — " where didſt thou " wander heedleſs of thy charge, when the " deceitful fiend tranſpierced that gentle " boſom?—O traitreſs!—traitreſs! —Ha " —dead! fools" — turning round and perceiving the conſternation viſible in every countenance—" ſhe does but ſleep. Death " is horrible and ghaſtly—palls, coffins, " ſkulls and bones are his inſignia! — " the dreary dropping charnal vault his " manſion! O horror—horror! awake my " love!—ſpeak—ſpeak, my Delia!" Then ſeizing her hand and ſuddenly ſhrinking back—" Ah heaven's, how deadly cold!"

Apprehenſive of ſtill greater extravagance, I approached him, with all the compoſure I could aſſume, and aſſuring him that if Delia awoke from her ſlumber and found him in her chamber, ſhe would reſent his preſence as a moſt indelicate and diſreſpectful interview, with exceſſive difficulty perſuaded him to accompany me into an adjoining apartment.

Again he ſunk into a gloomy ſilence, or only muttered to himſelf as he haſtily traverſed

verſed the room;—then burſting into a wild fit of laughter—" It is entertaining to be-
" hold hypocriſy entangled in her own
" ſnares! Fooliſh wretch, when you ex-
" tend your complicated web of deceit,
" little did you imagine who was to be
" your victim!—Go, wretched diſſembler,
" go howl over the body of your mur-
" dered ſon!—Try now the efficacy of
" the gold to which he was ſacrificed—
" will that ſop appeaſe the Cerberus that
" guards the gloomy entrance of the tomb,
" and bribe him to refund his prey!—
" Oh madneſs! madneſs!"

Thus did he rave in the intervals of his moody ſilence. Sometimes he wildly ſtarted and ſaid, his Delia ſhould lie no longer in that frightful ſleep, ſo much reſembling death. When Julia came to him, he aſked her why ſhe wept when he was on the eve of being happy, and bid her prepare to accompany him and his bride to Bloomfield.

Alas! his words ſeemed in part prophetic! his fancied bride, indeed, will ſoon be there!—In that church where a few months

ſince

ſince you beheld Lord Archer and our Delia, a happy bridegroom and a lovely bride; you muſt now aſſiſt at a far different ceremony—you muſt ſee their cold remains depoſited with the duſt of her anceſtors!—for ſuch was the deſire of my friend.—"I cannot," ſaid he, "wiſh to "be forgotten, when I am ſeen no more, "and I feel a ſweet conſolation in the idea "that Delia will ſometimes ſteal from the "arms of a more beloved and fortunate "huſband, to breathe over my grave the "ſigh of tender regret, and teach my child "to bedew it with the tears of filial af-"fection!"

Oh, that you were here to conſole your poor Henrietta! I have juſt now left her, determined to watch all night by the body of her friend. Julia ſtays with her. I have left Bloomfield to the care of his faithful ſervant Johnſon and his friend Mr. Morley, who returned in the evening from Bath, and have retired to write theſe melancholy particulars.— Adieu—the clock ſtrikes two, and I feel fatigued and ſtupified with ſorrow.

It

It was a delightful night; I left the ſhutters of the window open, to admit the beams of the moon which ſhone immediately on me, and ſeemed to diſpel ſome of that almoſt intolerable dejection which hung upon my ſpirits.—I flung myſelf upon my bed, and lay near an hour a prey to the moſt melancholy and anxious ſenſations, when the door ſuddenly opened and Bloomfield entered; in one hand he held a light, in the other a drawn ſword; but words can convey no idea of the expreſſion of his countenance, which at once exhibited the dejection of deſpondency and the wildneſs of deſperation.

"You ſleep, Revell," ſaid he, "Oh I "ſhall never ſleep again!—never ſhall I "know the bleſſing even of a tranſitory "exemption from torture, until I arrive at "the place of final forgetfulneſs! — O "earth!—O tomb!—I come! I come!— "expand your devouring jaws to receive "your voluntary victim! — but to be "dragged to an ignominious death amidſt "the ſhouts of an inſulting multitude!—

" To fall by the baſe hand of a common " executioner!—But am I not a mur- " derer, and muſt not juſtice take her " courſe.—Huſh!—already her myrmi- " dons beſiege the gates!—I ſaw—I heard " them—Revell, for this I came—I think " you love me,—can you dare to form a " generous reſolution?—can you act the " part of a hero and a friend?—Take this " weapon and when the executioners ap- " proach me—when they chain me like a " beaſt of prey,—then—remember Pierre " and Jaffier—take it and ſwear!"

" I ſwear—" ſaid I, giving way to an extravagance which I ſaw it would be in vain to contend with—" I ſwear."

" So now," ſaid he, " I am at peace, " my honour is ſecured!"

He gave me the ſword and ſet the light on the table.

" O moon!" cried he, ſtopping an inſtant to contemplate it—" never more ſhall " thy pale light direct my nocturnal wan- " derings! no more ſhalt thou guide my " trembling footſteps to the dark manſions

" of

" of my murdered friend. O Beaufort!
" Beaufort! but now thou ſleepeſt in thy
" narrow houſe!—Ha!—is it not ſtrange!
" —to murder our enemies is common—
" but to pierce the boſoms we moſt love!
" Revell begone!—let Julia fly me too—
" I love and therefore will deſtroy you.—
" O Delia!—O thou murdered angel!—
" Revell, I ſent her poiſon in a letter—ſhe
" drank it at her eyes, but the mortal ve-
" nom rankled at her heart—her huſband
" too!—Hark! did you not hear a noiſe!
" —they come—they come to ſeize me!"
Then dropping on his knees, and raiſing his hands and eyes to Heaven with a wild fervor—" Ere I depart this ſcene of guilt
" and miſery, hear thou eternal Ruler of
" the world!—hear the ſupplications of
" the wretch thou haſt created: O impute
" not to my charge the crimes I have
" blindly committed!—Accept theſe tor-
" tures of my ſoul as an atonement for my
" involuntary errors!—Behold I yield
" without a murmur to the ſtrict laws of
" thy impartial juſtice; let mercy now

" ſucceed to puniſhment—O take my fly-
" ing ſpirit!"

His ſervant, who had followed to watch him, knocked ſoftly at the door. Alarmed at the noiſe, he ſtarted from his knees with an air of the wildeſt diſtraction.

" O then they are here!" cried he, " So " now 'tis time to provide for my ſafety." He gazed around him as he ſpoke; then flying to the window, threw up the ſaſh and flung himſelf from it.—I flew to the window and beheld him ſtretched on the ground beneath; I heard a groan—it was his laſt. I went down, accompanied by Mr. Morley and his old afflicted ſervant who had been his companion in America: we raiſed him in our arms and carried him ſoftly to his apartment and laid him on the bed. Johnſon breathed a vein, but it would not bleed. I examined his head and found the ſkull was broken, and his auburn hair was clotted with his blood. Merciful God! I gazed on a third martyr to avarice and diſſimulation!

I con-

I continued in his apartment the remainder of the night. Become familiar with death, I no longer beheld it with horror, but rather viewed with envy that calm and fixed ſerene which no ſtorms can trouble. The heart that had throbbed with tumultuous anguiſh, now ceaſed to palpitate—the lips which had uttered the language of deſpair were now mute and unmoveable—and the eyes which had ſparkled with the wildneſs of frenzy, were fixed for ever in the ghaſtly glare of death!—Yes, Wentworth, I rejoice at the diſſolution of this amiable and unhappy young man, to whom a prolongation of life muſt have been a protraction of miſery. To us his cataſtrophe appears dreadful and deplorable; but to himſelf how bleſſed has been the tranſition! Was not the laſt effort of his mind, overthrown and diſtracted as it was, a devout and affectionate aſpiration to the Father of ſpirits?—Can we then doubt his felicity, or repine at the guiltleſs ſuicide!

Determined, however, to conceal the horrid circumſtances by which his death

was attended, not only from Henrietta and Julia, but alſo from the reſt of the family, with the aſſiſtance of Mr. Morley and his old weeping ſervant, I wiped the blood from the wound, and hiding it with his hair, ſettled him in bed; reſolved to tell the family he had expired in the night—Wentworth, I am almoſt exhauſted!—I cannot write the reſt—I cannot paint the wild deſpair of my Julia, or the deep and ſilent ſorrow of your Henrietta. I endeavour to repreſs my own feelings—I ſtrive to comfort and conſole them; but if I did not ſometimes leave them to give a vent to the agony of my ſoul, my heart would burſt.

This morning I flew from them; I wandered out alone and found myſelf at the end of the avenue, without perceiving where I was. I ſaw a carriage coming towards me, and imagining it was Doctor Harrington's, advanced to meet it. A gentleman put out his head—it was Seymor. I turned from him and would have ſhunned him if I could. He called out to me to ſtop, and alighting from the carriage, handed

handed out a lady whom I ſuppoſed to be his Jaqueline. They both approached me together, they came up to me; but I turned from them.

"Revell," ſaid Seymor, in a voice expreſſive of terror and apprehenſion, "Why "do you thus turn from your friend!— "Good heaven! why this countenance of "fixed deſpair? — relieve my anxiety— "what misfortunes!"

I ſaw he was but juſt arrived and ignorant of the fatal reverſe we had experienced ſince our ſeparation. I could not anſwer him; but pointing to a ſervant who juſt then croſſed the way, walked on —After ſome converſation with the ſervant, they both followed me;—Jaqueline weeping, leaned on her huſband's arm; but Seymor appeared thunderſtruck with aſtoniſhment. We walked towards the houſe in ſilent ſorrow, till Seymor, as if awaking from a dream, burſt into a ſudden exclamation.

"Is ſhe then gone—and for ever!— "Are her eyes—thoſe ſweet interpreters of "her blameleſs and benevolent ſoul, cloſed

" in the eternal ſhades of death? ſhall we
" no more behold that irreſiſtible ſmile—
" hear the muſic of that enchanting voice
" no more?—O Jaqueline! Fate has in
" reſerve but one ſtroke more ſevere—
" your death alone could wound my heart
" more deeply!—Yet Jaqueline, I pro-
" miſed you ſhould ſee that ſiſter excel-
" lence, and I will keep my word. Come,
" my friend, lead us to that mournful
" ſcene—let us once more behold all that
" now remains—"

His faultering voice permitted him not to cloſe the ſentence; ſtill unable to ſpeak, we proceeded weeping and ſilent till we reached the houſe.—I conducted them to Delia's apartment.

" Like bloſſom'd trees o'erturned by vernal ſtorm,
" Lovely in death, the beauteous ruin lay."

Henrietta would not ſuffer the body to be moved; it lay in the ſame tranquil attitude, only that the golden treſſes fell around the angel face like rays of glory, and Jenny had ſtrewed the bed with freſh flowers;—the ſame ſweet compoſure pervaded

vaded the lifeleſs countenance—the ſame angelic innocence ſmiled on the lips. Seymor and Jaqueline approached with trembling awe, and gazed with ſorrow and admiration. Seymor ſunk on his knees and caught the pale cold hand to his lips. His lips ſeemed to move, but he uttered no word diſtinctly; then ſuddenly riſing from the floor—"Fair veſtige of the loveliеſt of the "human race," ſaid he, "Adieu! adieu! "cold earth, whoſe angel ſmile reproves "our partial tears! I ſaw that breaſt was "ſtricken, but thought not the wound ſo "deep. Come, Jaqueline, let us leave "this manſion of affliction—far different "was the reception I had promiſed you. "Good God! when I laſt beheld its noble "owner! encircled by every earthly bleſſing! Oh the momentary triumphs of "humanity! Jaqueline, ere the expiration "of a few weeks, your form, like that, "may be cold and inanimate! Ah, had "you beheld that lovely countenance en-"lightened by the ſoft ſmiles of benevo-"lence and joy! Come, come—yet ere we

" go, let's take a relique from this once " ſainted ſhrine!"

He ſelected a golden ringlet as he ſpoke; Jaqueline approached and ſevered it from the head: he placed it in his boſom and turning to take a parting look, caught Jaqueline's hand and hurried out of the room. I followed, but did not endeavour to detain them; he promiſed to come once more, when he can come with calmneſs.

At Henrietta's deſire I have got an eminent painter from Bath to take a likeneſs of this departed angel, in the attitude ſhe now lies. You might place it as an altar-piece, in your family chapel, only that it would ſeduce your little flock to idolatry.

I wiſh, but dread to hear from you!—Yet, if I am not deceived in the characters of our revered friends, they will ſupport their misfortune with exemplary fortitude. Julia and I will return to them, we will conſtantly reſide with them, and entirely devote our time to the purpoſe of conſoling them. They love us and will be ſoothed by the exertions of our tenderneſs—we ſhall,

at

at leaſt prevent that burden of affliction from being rendered inſupportable by the melancholy gloom of ſolitude. Our child —our little Delia too, will be a ſource of tender conſolation to their aged boſoms. Yes, my dear friend, my heart tells me that our united affectionate efforts to aſſuage their affliction and reſtore them to cheerfulneſs and ſerenity, will not be ineffectual. Ignorant of the cauſes of their calamity—unconſcious of thoſe ſecret fatal circumſtances from which their misfortune originated, they behold in it no more than a common diſpenſation of the Divine Providence; and conſider the dear objects of their ſorrow as peculiarly favoured by the Almighty, and called by him from every bleſſing this imperfect ſtate can afford to an exquiſite and permanent felicity;—not as the victims of miſery—driven by unmerited anguiſh to an early grave. Thus are their minds unembittered by thoſe piercing regrets and reſentments that prey upon ours.

Henrietta does not yet ſpeak—ſhe ſits with the dear child of her adoption, preſſed cloſe to her boſom, and bathes it in floods of tears.

To-morrow the three bodies are to be carried to Briſtol, to be ſent from thence by ſea—O that the dreadful ſolemnity were over!

REVELL.

LETTER CXII.

Mrs. Wentworth to *the Rev. Mr. Wentworth.*

Mount Avon, Nov. 6th, 1783.

I INTENDED not to have written to you again. O Wentworth, our hearts are leſs ſuſceptible than we are apt to imagine them, for mine is not yet broken!

I will return to you, but not until the funeral obſequies are over; my ſoul is already overcharged with its own afflictions—it cannot ſuſtain the additional weight of the ſorrows of others.

Soon

Soon as the ſad ceremony is performed, write to me, but do not tranſmit any affecting particulars—O do not attempt a repreſentation of ſcenes which my own imagination, perverſely induſtrious to torment me, preſents in colours too poignantly vivid. Tell me ſimply when you can leave Ireland, and I will meet you at Holy-head with Julia and Revell, our faithful, generous friends, and my dear adopted child, that precious pledge of her affection, who ſhall be eternally remembered, and eternally beloved.

Yet think not that every faculty of my ſoul—each tender ſenſation of my heart, is abſorbed in an enthuſiaſm of gratitude for a perſon no longer ſenſible to a tenderneſs once the ſource of the pureſt reciprocal delight. Think not that all my proſpects of felicity cloſed, when my Delia died—even in that trying moment your idea was my conſolation and my ſupport.—I relied on your piety to combat my affliction, and your philoſophy to help me to ſuſtain it; you, my beſt and deareſt friend, were my preceptor

preceptor in these sublime sciences, and your pupil shall not disgrace you; yet bear a little with my weakness; religion requires resignation, not stoicism, of its votaries—and I hope I am resigned.

Though deep my affliction, I look forward with hope: this violence of sorrow will subside into a pensive regret, a melancholy tranquillity. Amazing are the effects of time, and wisely benevolent is that Power who renders the human mind thus ductile to its impressions. I reflect with astonishment that the ideas of joy and satisfaction, which, were I to judge from my present feelings, I should imagine were entirely extinguished, do but slumber in my bosom, and shall again revive. Yes, perhaps, the hour may come when I can reflect on her without anguish, and utter her name without tears: but oh, never, never shall such days as those I have passed, return —never—never can I find another Delia!

But conjugal felicity and parental endearment are still our own—the consolations of friendship, and the approbation of heaven;

heaven; what then ſhall diſturb our tranquillity?—Shall I repine at a misfortune, of which I would not reſign the remembrance for any equivalent this world could offer me;—could any fatal oblivion eraze my Delia's idea from my boſom, it would loſe its deareſt treaſure—its ſweeteſt ſatisfaction and its nobleſt incentive to virtue!

Julia ſcreams aloud!—Oh heavens!—they are driving the nails into the coffins—my blood runs cold—my hand ſtiffens—I go to ſnatch a parting look—a laſt embrace!—

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